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Inside: GOVERNOR'S STATE OF THE STATE, EDUCATION FINANCE 101, PARKING CONCERNS, AND MORE

This Week's Bill Introductions HF263-HF373

SESSION Weekly

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CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

Agriculture • 5
Budget • 5
Crime • 5
Education • 6

Elections • 6
Environment • 6
Higher Education • 6
Local Government • 7

Taxes • 9
Technology • 9
Veterans • 9

FEATURES

STATE OF THE STATE: "Let's go Minnesota." • 3

REACTION: State of the State from both sides. • 4

EDUCATION FINANCE 101: Making sense of complex formula. • 12

ONE FRAME AT A TIME: Twenty-five years of Capitol history on display. • 14

SIDE BY SIDE CIVILITY: One majority member crosses the aisle. • 15

MEET NEW MEMBERS: Reps. Cybart and Fritz are profiled. • 16

PARKING HEADACHES: When it comes to big issues, parking tops the list. • 17

CAPITOL CENTENNIAL: Burdick in bronze. • 18

DEPARTMENTS/RESOURCES

Come to the Capitol • 10
What's on the Web • 18
Frequently Called Numbers • 18

Committee Chairs • 22
Minnesota Index - Women Prisoners • 24

On the cover: Gov. Tim Pawlenty presents his State of the State address at the Mayo Clinic Superior Drive Support Center in Rochester on Jan. 18.

—Photo by: Andrew VonBank

Room for improvement

Pawlenty proposes higher education partnership

By **BRETT MARTIN**

The state of the state is good, but not good enough.” So said Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who used his Jan. 18 State of the State address to outline his priorities, which range from health care to public education to the environment— all without raising taxes.

Pawlenty took his message to the Mayo Clinic Superior Drive Support Center in Rochester to highlight the vast number of jobs that economic boosters like the Mayo Clinic produce.

However, as the area grows, higher education must meet the needs of the marketplace, Pawlenty said. “Rochester needs a strong higher education leadership structure with the responsibility and authority for decision-making and commitment to focus, coordination and planning for the future.”

Pawlenty said the first step in the process would be to create a legal and governing entity to be responsible for University Center

“I say — Let’s go Minnesota. Let’s get moving. We’ve got work to do. And it starts with setting priorities.”

- Gov. Tim Pawlenty

Rochester, a higher education partnership between Rochester Community and Technical College, the University of Minnesota and Winona State University.

“My budget announcement next week will include more than \$3 million to get this new university leadership structure started, staffed and paid for,” Pawlenty said. He called on other colleges and universities to “try new things as part of an effort to better serve their students and our great state.”

To that end, the governor’s “Get Ready, Get Credit” program would allow students to earn college credits in their high schools with the state footing the bill.

“Our students will learn more, spend less

time in college, and save mom and dad and themselves a lot of money,” Pawlenty said.

As college costs continue to rise, Pawlenty said he asked the director of the Higher Education Services Office to create a plan toward funding public higher education students rather than institutions. The plan is scheduled for presentation next year with implementation for 2008-09.

“Under this approach, colleges will need to be more accountable to their customers, more responsive to the marketplace and more accountable for results to succeed,” Pawlenty said.

He also wants to ensure future success by working together. For Minnesota to be globally competitive, new investments are needed, he said, citing the “historical partnership” between the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic to advance the world’s medical research marketplace and benefit Minnesota.

As part of that partnership, Pawlenty wants to create a new genomics lab in Rochester, which he included in his bonding bill last year. It did not pass in the Senate. He called on the House and Senate to act on the bonding bill this year.

“I want to be perfectly clear on this point: I won’t sign a bonding bill this year without this project in it,” Pawlenty said.

As part of the partnership, Pawlenty said \$20 million has been committed for research, with the state pledging \$15 million of that figure and a private company agreeing to contribute the remainder.

Emphasizing the importance of job growth without increasing taxes, Pawlenty recalled the words of Gov. Arne Carlson, who gave his State of the State address in Rochester in 1994, saying, “If we care about jobs, we must take a long-term pledge not to raise taxes — not now and not for years to come. Government can and must live within its means.”

Pawlenty pointed out that Democratic governors in some other states are tackling their budget woes while pledging not to raise taxes.

“Since Gov. Carlson gave his State of the State speech here in 1994, state spending has nearly doubled,” Pawlenty said. “I say again, we don’t have a tax problem, we have a spending problem.”

Keeping a lid on taxes forces the government to be more accountable, set priorities and spend smarter, he said, adding that it will prepare Minnesota to become a global leader.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Rep. Bernie Lieder watches Gov. Tim Pawlenty’s State of the State address in the DFL Caucus media office Jan. 18. Pawlenty presented his address to legislators at the Mayo Clinic Superior Drive Support Center in Rochester.

First Reading continued on page 4

First Reading continued from page 4

"We need to embrace change. We need to be bold. And, most importantly, we need to get moving," Pawlenty said. "I say — Let's go Minnesota. Let's get moving. We've got work to do. And it starts with setting priorities."

It also involves citizens keeping local government spending in check.

As part of his "Turbocharged — Truth in Taxation" proposal, taxpayers would be able to have a referendum if enough people think a levy increase exceeds a reasonable level.

Under the plan, each Minnesota taxpayer would receive three postcards with their Truth in Taxation form — one from the county, city and school district. Taxpayers could vote "no" on the postcards if they think a levy increase is too high. If enough people are dissatisfied, a levy referendum would be triggered.

"We need to allow the people the chance to directly speak on the major issues of the day

in Minnesota," Pawlenty said.

Reforming and improving the healthcare system are also keys to being an effective global competitor, Pawlenty said, calling healthcare premium increases one of the greatest challenges the state now faces.

"The other big challenge is that our government welfare healthcare system is out of control and growing at a rate that will consume almost all of the state's budget within 15 years," he said. "If we don't get this under control, it will bankrupt the state and strangle our ability to fund our other priorities, such as schools and roads." He also proposed the expansion of health savings accounts.

Asking the Legislature to pass his initiative to double the amount of ethanol used in gasoline sold in Minnesota, Pawlenty said, "Minnesota can lead the way globally by being the 'renewable fuel capitol of America.'"

"Let's make Minnesota the Saudi Arabia of renewable fuels."

Other Pawlenty priorities include:

- Exploring a better deal for Minnesotans on the issue of gaming;
- Improving public safety by imposing new penalties and longer prison sentences for methamphetamine and sex offenders offenses;
- Funding to improve the environment and natural resources by creating a Conservative Heritage Foundation, and passing a constitutional amendment to dedicate funding to the environment and natural resources;
- Performance-based teacher pay;
- Continuing to help needy seniors obtain lower cost prescription drugs from Canada;
- Showing the nation how the healthcare market can be transformed through the Smart Buy purchasing alliance; and
- Additional financial incentives for Minnesota National Guard service. 🏠



House Minority Leader Matt Entenza reacts to the governor's speech.

Questioning the vision

Rep. Tony Sertich (DFL-Chisholm) said if he lived in Rochester, he would have loved Gov. Tim Pawlenty's State of the State address.

"He seemed to be talking to Rochester," said Sertich, a minority whip. "If you're from Rochester, it was great. I'd like to make sure the other campuses are run properly before we start another." The governor proposed to create a new state university in Rochester.

Otherwise, Sertich and other House DFL leaders didn't think much of the speech. "I felt the speech lacked a vision," he said.

One of Pawlenty's proposals was a change to Truth-in-Taxation forms, which are sent annually to property owners from the appropriate taxing district. The forms would include a Taxpayer Satisfaction Survey, allowing taxpayers to mail in a "no" vote if they think tax hikes are unreasonable. If enough dissatisfaction is registered, a levy referendum on the increase would be triggered.

"I don't believe in leadership by postcard," Sertich said. "Citizens are elected to take those positions. We're going in a really wacky direction."

Rep. Connie Bernardy (DFL-Fridley) was particularly disappointed that Pawlenty didn't mention transportation, particularly the Northstar commuter rail, or education. "We need leadership from the state to stabilize our funding and make our schools successful. Minnesota really needs to increase its competitive edge," she said.

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) said the speech gave short shrift to two key points. "His attention to health care issues and also environmental issues were pretty light and weak," she said.

She applauded Pawlenty for taking his speech out of St. Paul, but she stopped short of applauding the content. "The speech was good but it wasn't good enough to get Minnesota to the next level to compete in the global marketplace."

(M. WETZEL)



House Speaker Steve Sviggum comments on the governor's speech.

Meeting state priorities

Gov. Tim Pawlenty's State of the State address was right on target, according to Rep. Laura Brod (R-New Prague), an assistant House majority leader. "He hit upon the priorities that I heard when I was out door-knocking: education, health care and jobs. He talked about things that matter to a lot of people."

The governor is clearly ready for legislative action, she said. "I hope we as legislators can move things forward."

"I liked the theme and I liked the location," said House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon). "With 'Let's Go Minnesota' he's saying we've done okay but there's a lot more to do." Rochester was a good pick for the speech site because it's a job success story and a community with thriving technology.

If the last session had worked out the way he had wanted it to and the bonding bill had passed, Sviggum would have preferred to be in Rochester for a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the proposed genome laboratory.

While the roadmap offered by Pawlenty is a start, Sviggum said that the governor's upcoming budget message and the release of the February economic forecast are other important pieces. "Then the Legislature sets our priorities and our roadmaps, and they will align with the governor's priorities."

Rep. Rod Hamilton (R-Mountain Lake) said while campaigning he heard from people concerned about education, health care and jobs. "It was refreshing to hear the governor address all three topics."

Hamilton often hears from people in his district that they want individuals from St. Paul to go to Greater Minnesota and see what's going on. "That's just what the governor did by taking his speech to Rochester." Hamilton also was encouraged the speech touched upon topics important to Greater Minnesota, including economic opportunity with renewable fuels, job opportunity building zones and the methamphetamine epidemic.

(R. DUNN)

Committee deadlines set

House and Senate leadership have agreed on a number of dates for the legislative session, including committee deadlines.

- **Tuesday, April 5** — Bill must be out of policy committees in the house of origin.
- **Tuesday, April 12** — All House and Senate files must be out of all policy committees in the other body.
- **Friday, April 22** — Omnibus finance bills must be out of House and Senate finance committees.

Additionally, a joint session to name members to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents is scheduled for Feb. 16; an Easter/spring recess is scheduled from 2 p.m. March 23 until noon March 29; and there will be no floor sessions or committee activity April 25, the day after Passover.

★ **AGRICULTURE**

Applied dairy economics

Each dairy cow in Minnesota generates a direct \$5,000 in economic activity, according to Professor Brian Buhr of the University of Minnesota Department of Applied Economics.

Buhr was part of a dairy industry overview presented to the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee Jan. 19.

The direct economic impacts of animal agriculture in the state total more than \$5.2 billion, he said. "Animals are engines of growth in rural Minnesota."

The committee also heard from dairy producers ways to keep that engine running.

"Getting over the stereotype of what a dairy farm should be" and not discouraging one type of production over another are key ways for the state to help foster a healthy dairy industry, said Bob LeFebvre, executive director of the Minnesota Milk Producers Association.

Testimony from Kathy Skiba, whose North Branch dairy operation milks 100 cows, and Connie Meyer of Rolling Stone, who has 500 cows, echoed a common theme: the importance of legislative passage of a tax credit for investments in dairy facilities and local

government adoption of consistent livestock siting regulations.

"The business climate in Minnesota is excellent," Buhr said to summarize a recent survey of top animal product processors. "We have a concentration of agribusinesses, farms, we've got the knowledge, we've got the capital, the University of Minnesota, state government is supportive of agriculture, it's an important part of the state, but we are in danger of losing that advantage if we don't pay attention to it."

★ **BUDGET**

Deficiency dollars first

The first bill to pass the House in 2005 is a \$30.4 million deficiency spending measure to help keep afloat the Criminal Gang Strike Force, public defenders, and a handful of other state programs who are slated for a budget squeeze by June 30 or sooner.

Sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), HF57 passed Jan. 20 by a 131-2 vote. It now moves to the Senate, where Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) is the sponsor of a companion bill (SF350).

Some of the larger appropriations would include:

- \$13.4 million for regional treatment centers for civilly committed sex offenders,
- \$7.7 million to offset the loss of public defender co-pay revenue after the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that a 2003 law obligating defendants to pay \$50 for a public defender was unconstitutional,
- \$4.4 million to help offset corrections costs driven in part by more methamphetamine offenders resulting in an unanticipated prison population growth and rising health costs to combat tooth decay and Hepatitis C within that population, and
- \$3.7 million for the Agriculture Department and Health Department relocation to a joint facility.

Originally, the Pawlenty administration recommended a schedule shift in state payments to school districts to offset the cost of the bill.

Majority and minority caucus members, senators, and the governor's staff instead determined that transferring \$24.1 million from the budget reserve in the state General Fund made the most sense, Knoblach said. "I

would feel a little uncomfortable about that, members, if I didn't feel in my heart that we are going to have more than that money as additional surplus in the February forecast."

In the event of a bad forecast, he said, the administration has indicated it will come forward with a plan to fill the budget reserve.

"I expect that we would follow on and come up with our own plan — if we don't like that plan — for how to fill the reserve ourselves," Knoblach said.

"I hope that this can now be the first chapter of many chapters of Democrats and Republicans working together," said Minority Leader Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul). "This bill sets the right first tone."

★ **CRIME**

Bed space

Minnesota has a problem in its state prisons system that is going to get worse.

"There's no more room at the Corrections Inn," Deputy Corrections Commission Dennis Benson told members of the House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 13. The committee took no action.

Using information from a December 2004 report, Benson said beds at every state facility are filled and the state is leasing nearly 100 beds from county jails and workhouses. In addition, the state has rented 150 beds at Prairie Correctional Facility, a private facility in Appleton, Minn.

The total prison population was 8,333 as of July 1, 2004, with 90 percent men and 10 percent women. The total population is projected to grow by about 700 per year. By 2010, 11,049 prisoners are expected.

If the current annual trend continues, the Prairie Correctional Facility will be full within two years and a new prison will be needed every two years thereafter, said Benson. A proposed bonding bill includes money to double the corrections facility at Faribault, which would help ease the situation for a while.

Benson attributes the increase in prisoners to several factors. There has been a steady increase in new commitments. Also, prisoners are receiving longer sentences. There has also been a dramatic increase in revocation

of supervised releases sending people back to prison, according to Benson.

The methamphetamine epidemic has had a significant effect on prison populations since 2001, said Benson. Methamphetamine offenders in prison have increased from 139 in 2001 to 1,012 in July 2004.

Over 260 felony Driving While Intoxicated offenders have been admitted to prison since the new law took effect Aug. 1, 2002, that made a person's fourth conviction within 10 years a felony. "Current projections estimate that the number of felony DWI offenders will reach over 400 by January 2007," said Benson.

Changes in statute made by the Legislature have also resulted in more sex offenders going to prison and staying for longer sentences.

★ EDUCATION

Seagren confirmed

The Senate easily confirmed former Rep. Alice Seagren Jan. 20 as the state's education commissioner. The vote was 62-0.

Seagren was appointed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty last July to replace Cheri Pierson Yecke, whom the Senate failed to confirm on the final night of the 2004 session. Seagren's term expires Jan. 1, 2007.

The Bloomington Republican served in the House of Representatives from 1993-2004. During each term she served on at least one education committee, including chairing education finance committees in each of her last six years. Before her legislative service, Seagren spent more than a decade as a school volunteer and served on the Bloomington School Board.

"I've come to recognize her as a passionate advocate for kids," said Sen. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins), chair of the Senate Education Committee. "She's a hard-working, intelligent analyst of practices we should adopt to improve our schools."

Unlike Yecke, who was sometimes criticized for being political and divisive, Seagren has been known as a person who can work with people on both sides of the aisle.

"I know she'll make a real effort to reach compromise," Kelley said. "She'll work in the best interest for all our children and all our public schools."

By law, the Senate must confirm all state commissioners.

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

★ ELECTIONS

Election Day buffer zones

While not ready to lay out a legislative agenda, Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer told members of the House Civil Law and Elections Committee Jan. 19 that, as the states moves to the January 2006 mandatory compliance of the Help America Vote Act, several changes to Election Day procedures may be proposed.

The act was passed by Congress in 2002 and requires state and local governments to reform election processes and systems to ensure the equal treatment of and accessibility for all voters.

To bring the state into compliance, new equipment may be required for some polling places and the size of some polling places may need to be addressed, Kiffmeyer said. But extending the 100-foot Election Day buffer zone around polling places will be one of her legislative priorities.

During the 2004 elections, Kiffmeyer said her office received complaints from voters who felt intimidated having to walk past activists as they entered a polling place. "A buffer of 100 feet for the protection of our voters is obviously too small, too close ... there ought to be a zone where there is no intrusion on the voter," she said.

Kiffmeyer said that when it comes to enforcing the buffer zone, the law does not distinguish between overtly partisan groups in support of a candidate and those expressing their support for an issue. "Those authorized to conduct the elections or supervise are allowed within that buffer zone," she said.

Kiffmeyer was at the meeting to give members an overview of the Elections Division of the Office of the Secretary of State. She said that for her office, elections are more than paper ballots, "they are a system" and after Election Day comes "the ongoing maintenance of democracy."

Annually, there are about 80 days when elections are held in the state, she said. There were 22 in December 2004, January 2005 saw two, 10 are planned for February and two for March.

★ ENVIRONMENT

Working together

Discussion regarding a possible merger of the Pollution Control Agency (PCA) and Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) emerged Jan. 13 in the House Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

PCA Commissioner Sheryl Corrigan and OEA Director Art Dunn presented the committee with an overview of their respective agencies and missions. They spoke of ways in which collaboration already takes place and future opportunities for "blending strengths to achieve results."

Together, the departments currently employ about 800 people across the state. Along with compatible mission statements to help Minnesotans protect the environment, they share the same headquarters in St. Paul, and the OEA director is actually appointed by the PCA director.

Dunn's presentation closed with the concept of combining the regulatory responsibilities of the PCA and the financial and technical assistance efforts of the OEA into a new entity known as the Department of Environmental Protection.

Committee Chair Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) asked if a formal proposal would be coming forward. Though the formalities are still under discussion by the executive branch, Corrigan said, she and Dunn intend to move forward with their combined efforts on a conceptual basis.

★ HIGHER EDUCATION

Monetary request

Listing six strategic priorities, officials of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system are seeking a \$66.5 million base increase for the 2006-07 biennium, the smallest request in system history.

Speaking Jan. 19 before the House Higher Education Finance Committee, system officials noted that its overall budget request includes a base budget adjustment of \$130.8 million for enrollment growth, as provided by law, and a reallocation of approximately \$60 million in existing resources.

If fully funded, the plan assumes tuition will rise 4 percent each of the next two years. That amounts to about \$143 per year for community or technical college students, and \$186 per student at state universities. Tuition is currently \$3,437 per year at state colleges and \$4,474 per year at state universities.

By comparison, students have faced double-digit percent tuition increases in each of the last four years, and a nearly 60 percent increase since 2000.

Laura King, MnSCU chief financial officer, said the increase would help meet critical needs (\$16 million), enhance salaries to compete in the academic marketplace (\$13.9 million), improve outreach to underserved students (\$12 million), cover the costs

of some repair and replacement projects (\$11 million), increase e-learning (\$8.1 million) and create a fund for new educational programs that will meet emerging state needs (\$5.5 million).

Included in the amount targeted to meet critical needs is \$10 million to address the state's nursing shortage, including an expansion of capacity to train 440 new registered nurses in the next two years, and \$3 million each for teacher education and to help farmers and small business owners succeed. The latter would be achieved through tuition subsidies and an expansion of online courses for these programs.

Chancellor James McCormick expressed concern about the direction of state higher education funding, especially since spending per student has declined by \$1,146 since 1999, while enrollment has been increased approximately 28 percent since 1998.

"Making it harder for students to attend college is not the way we should be going," he said.

★ LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Biomass conversion

The cities of Hibbing and Virginia own and operate coal-fired boilers that produce steam and electricity, but they are facing the shutdown of the inefficient facilities.

On the other hand, according to a study by the University of Minnesota's Natural Resources Institute, 500,000 tons of biomass is left on the ground every year within a 75-mile radius of these plants. That residue from existing logging operations could be used to power those boilers, while also increasing revenue for loggers and private landholders, and retaining jobs at the boilers.

So the two cities have teamed up to form the Laurentian Energy Authority, which is asking the state for \$2.5 million to help.

Sponsored by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), HF8 would grant the money to the authority to build a yard for processing wood waste for the two facilities. It has no Senate companion.

The bill was heard by the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 19 and held over for possible inclusion in the committee's bonding resolution.

"Hibbing and Virginia began investigating biomass with the local logging community," said Jim Kochevar, general manager of Hibbing Public Utilities. "They recognized a need for the market. They were leaving product all over the forest floor."

Combined, the aging boilers provide

PRaising the Past



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Kennedy Barber sang Mariah Carey's "Hero" during the Jan. 13 presentation of a House resolution commemorating the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

70 jobs, which would be retained if biomass could work. The investment, which could be as high as \$50 million and would include money from local, state, federal and private sources, would pay for conversion of the plants.

"It's my understanding that you can heat a home with biomass for half the cost of natural gas," said Committee Chair Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont).

Pavilion renovation

The Detroit Lakes Pavilion, on the north shore of Little Detroit Lake, is a big part of the region's history, but after 90 years, it's showing its age.

So, the city is asking for \$283,000 to renovate the city-owned facility, which was built in 1915 and hosted one of the first concerts of rock icon and Fargo native Bobby Vee. Lawrence Welk, Roy Orbison, Conway Twitty and Jerry Lee Lewis also entertained there.

A monetary request (HF30), sponsored

by Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth), was recommended by the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 19 for possible inclusion in the committee's bonding bill.

"It really has been a big part of the history of the Detroit Lakes area," Mayor Larry Bublitz said. "It's used for family reunions, class reunions, it's busy every holiday and all summer."

The pavilion has been the site of other events such as interpretive dances performed by American Indians from the White Earth Indian Reservation, orchestras, wedding receptions, arts and crafts fairs, water carnival events in the summer and the community Polar Fest in the winter.

The \$567,000 project calls for a complete renovation of both the pavilion and bandshell. In addition to state dollars, local public and private sources and in-

kind services would cover the remaining funds.

If the state approves the money, construction could start this spring and be done in the fall of 2006.

A companion bill (SF94), sponsored by Sen. Keith Langseth (DFL-Glyndon) awaits committee action.

Ship support

The Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center, a Moorhead facility that offers historical lectures and exhibits about the Red River Valley and features an actual Viking ship replica, needs to have its building revamped and upgraded. It is asking the state for some help.

HF93, sponsored by Rep. Morrie Lanning (R-Moorhead), would provide \$1 million to the city to replace the building's roof and foundation, install a security system in the church located on the site and replace the

ship's support system. The \$1 million would be matched by the city.

The measure was considered by the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 19, and may be included in the committee's bonding resolution.

"This project has been a partnership between the city of Moorhead and the state of Minnesota and a lot of generous people from all parts of the state," Lanning said.

The center provides the interpretive programming for the ship and the region's history, said Dean Sather, the center's executive director.

When the center was built in 1986, the state covered half the construction costs. The state also paid for a 1998 expansion. The city covers all the operating costs.

The ship was built by a retired Moorhead teacher in 1982. The church is a hand-carved replica of a church in Norway. A total of 40,000 people visit it annually.

The center is also home to the Clay County Historical Society, and is an important part of the region's economic development efforts, according to information supplied by Sather.

A companion bill (SF119), sponsored by Sen. Keith Langseth (DFL-Glyndon) awaits committee action.

Corridor connection

St. Paul's East Side might have been in danger of becoming a forgotten area after the closing of Whirlpool and the Stroh brewery, but the construction of Phalen Boulevard, part of the Phalen Corridor project, has been a crucial part of preventing that.

"Absentee landlords moved in, drugs moved in, crime moved in, the East Side has had some really, really tough times," said Curt Milburn, project director of the Phalen Corridor, which is a community reinvestment effort with assistance from the public, government and the business community.

The area has now rebounded, he said, with the creation of new housing projects, 15 new businesses and almost 1,000 new jobs.

"In the past four months we've won five awards — some are national, some are local, some are statewide," he said.

The work is only about two-thirds done; however, and the project needs \$4 million from the state to finish, Milburn told the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 19. The committee will consider the request for possible inclusion in its bonding request to the House Capital Investment Committee.

HF293, sponsored by Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul), would provide the money

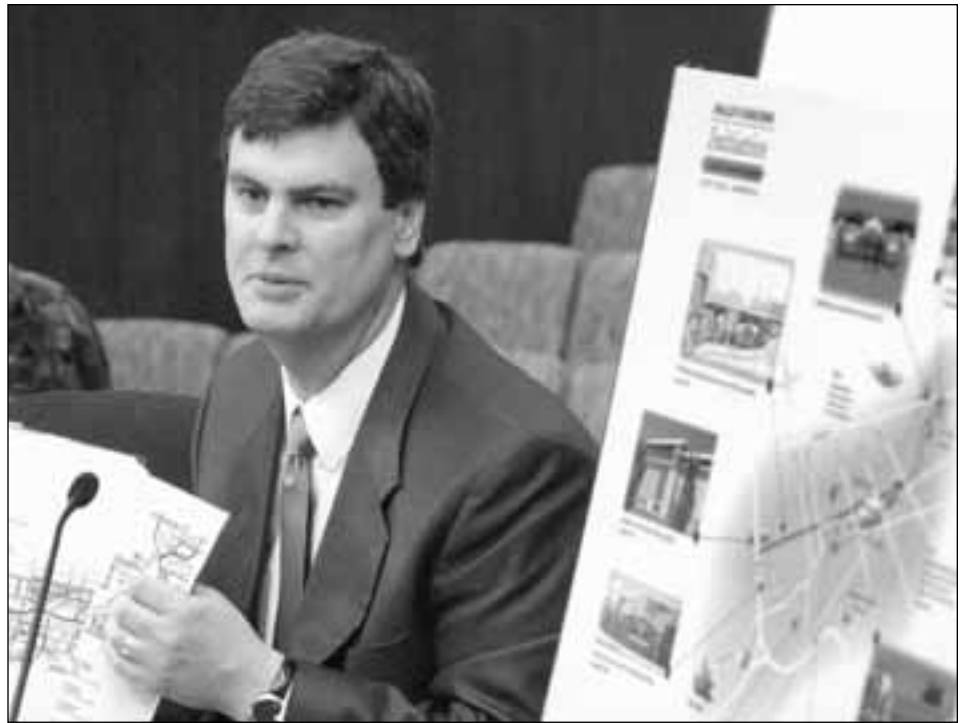


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Curt Milburn, project director of the Phalen Corridor, testifies Jan. 19 before the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee in support of a bill that would allocate funds to finish the corridor project.

to help finish the project. Milburn said the federal government recently came up with its final \$5 million to complete the project. He said the city has agreed to contribute \$1 million if the state contributes \$4 million. Finishing the road would link Interstate 35E to Johnson Parkway, and provide access to 700 units of housing, parks and 100 acres of fields. The governor proposed \$1.5 million in his bonding proposal. Supporters hope to start construction this year.

Flood relief

A proposal for \$13.2 million to help the city of Roseau finish its recovery from the disastrous flooding of June 2002 will be considered for inclusion in a bonding resolution from the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee.

"We had close to \$100 million in damage to a city of 2,800 people," Mayor Jeff Pelowski told the committee Jan. 19. "We've had an extraordinarily long run since 2002 rebuilding our community. It seems like a long time ago, yet it seems like just the other day."

Committee members were shown a video tape, which showed much of the city under more than a foot of water in some places, accompanied by rapid currents.

Rep. Maxine Penas (R-Badger), the bill's sponsor, previously said that 80 percent of the city's homes were damaged or

destroyed along with 100 businesses, affecting 1,800 families.

Of the \$13.2 million requested in HF50, \$4.4 million would be used to repair infrastructure on the city's east side, and those dollars would match \$8 million in money from the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Economic Development Administration and the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Much of the west side has been repaired, but people on the east side continue to suffer the effects of the flood, Pelowski said.

The remainder of the package would replace the city hall and council chambers, auditorium, library, museum and police department. City offices are now housed in a library-museum building, and that building's foundation is beginning to falter.

Penas said the governor's bonding proposal is for \$10.6 million, but Pelowski said that

Committee additions

Several House members were recently added to House standing committees.

Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan) has been named to the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee; Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) and Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) are now members of the Property and Local Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee; and Rep. Michael Beard (R-Shakopee) was named ex-officio member to the House Transportation Committee.

wouldn't be enough, and would cast the city council in the role of "playing God."

"We would have to arbitrarily start certain projects and not start others," he said.

A companion bill (SF199), sponsored by Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) awaits committee action.

TAXES



Spurring tsunami giving

Minnesotans could have a tax incentive to help victims of the Dec. 26 tsunami that devastated a number of nations along the Indian Ocean rim, under a bill passed Jan. 20 by the House 132-0.

HF166/SF218*, sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) and Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope) now moves to the governor's desk for action.

"The tale of devastation goes on and on," Abrams said. "The tale of relief is also very heartening."

The bill would conform Minnesota law regarding charitable giving deductions to a federal law signed by President Bush Jan. 7. It would allow those who donate to tsunami relief efforts during January 2005 to deduct those cash contributions on 2004 state individual and corporate income tax returns. Without the bill, contributors would have to wait until the 2005 forms are filed.

The bill would offer incentives for those who itemize deductions and those who do not. Minnesota taxpayers who do not itemize on federal forms would be eligible to deduct from state taxable income 50 percent of total charitable contributions in excess of \$500.

"I don't think very many of the people who are contributing out of their hearts really care about the deduction, but it does show that government is on their side," Abrams said.

TECHNOLOGY



Cutting the cost of business

Nanotechnology is research and technology development at the atomic, molecular and macromolecular levels, creating and using systems that have unusual characteristics because of their small size.

With nanotechnology, fuels can be more efficient, medications can be more effective with fewer side effects, materials can be stronger, clothing can be made to repel staining and materials can be made lighter and stronger.

Folks in Rushford believe an institute for nanotechnology could lead to many moder-

ate- to high-paying jobs in their community, so they're asking the state for a grant of \$600,000 to help with the \$6 million project.

A bill was heard Jan. 19 by the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee, and will be considered for possible inclusion in the committee's bonding proposal. Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) is the sponsor of HF78.

The institute would act as a business incubator, helping new businesses in nanotechnology, providing lab testing and services to schools. The new businesses would, through the institute, be able to identify money sources and potential partners for planning and growth. As the new businesses grow, they could provide jobs, said Kevin Klungtvedt, president of the Rushford Institute for Nanotechnology, a nonprofit corporation that would operate the institute.

The institute would be housed in an existing facility in Rushford, with equal parts coming from state, federal and private sources, Klungtvedt said.

"We support this project," said Jim Johnson, president of Minnesota State College - Southeast Technical. "We are looking at technical jobs we can bring to rural America. I'm looking forward to developing a program that will grow out of the institute," he said. Among the jobs that could be created are scanning electron microscopes, drafting and mechanical design. He hopes that participants will take nanotechnology courses at the college and then work at the institute.

A Senate companion (SF139), sponsored by Sen. Bob Kierlin (R-Winona), awaits committee action.

VETERANS



Veterans homes projects

A \$7.2 million appropriation to the Minnesota Veterans Homes Board for capital projects was presented to the House Health Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 19.

Sponsored by Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls), H75 would authorize the issuance of state bonds for five capital projects at veterans homes. The projects are:

- \$2.5 million for a special care unit addition at Fergus Falls,
- \$1.8 million for renovating the Minneapolis dining and kitchen facilities,
- \$1.5 million to upgrade clinical space at Silver Bay,
- \$1.1 million for remodeling the Minneapolis adult day care service building, and
- \$268,100 for an Alzheimer's addition at Luverne.

Stephan Musser, executive director of the Minnesota Veterans Homes Board, said there are an estimated 462,000 veterans in Minnesota, and there are currently 861 beds in the veterans homes. Musser said one of the board's goals is to bring the facilities up to today's long-term care standards. There are as many as 300 veterans waiting to get into a veterans home.

The average age of veterans in the beds is 78 and increasing, Musser said. The number of veterans over 85 years old is expected to peak in 2010, then decline gradually through 2025.

Committee Chair Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) thanked veterans for their service and sacrifice, saying, "Freedom is not free."

The state has five veterans homes, located in Minneapolis, Hastings, Silver Bay, Luverne and Fergus Falls.

The committee referred the bill to the House Capital Investment Committee.

A Senate companion (SF66), sponsored by Sen. Cal Larson (R-Fergus Falls), awaits committee action.

Minnesota State Agencies

(Area code 651)

Administration	296-8261
Agriculture	297-2200
Toll-Free	1-800-967-2474
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Education	582-8200
Employment and	
Economic Development	296-3711
Toll-Free	1-888-GET-JOBS
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information Hotline	296-2616
Explore Minnesota Tourism	296-5029
Toll-Free	1-800-657-3700
Finance	296-5900
Health	215-5800
Housing Finance	296-7608
Toll-Free	1-800-657-3769
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll-Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	297-3933
Labor and Industry	284-5000
Toll-Free	1-800-342-5354
Military Affairs	268-8925
Natural Resources	296-6157
Toll-Free	1-888-646-6367
Pollution Control Agency	296-6300
Toll-Free	1-800-657-3864
Public Safety	282-6565
Driver and Vehicle Services	296-6911
Fire Marshal	215-0500
Alcohol and Gambling	
Enforcement Division	296-6979
State Patrol	282-6871
Div. of Homeland Security and	
Emergency Management	296-0466
Revenue	
Income Tax Helpline	296-3781
Transportation	296-3000
Toll-Free	1-800-657-3774
Veterans Affairs	296-2562



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

How to get here

Location

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

I-94 eastbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn left. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go nearly one block and enter Parking Lot AA on the left just before Rice Street.

I-94 westbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn right. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go nearly one block and enter Parking Lot AA on the left just before Rice Street.

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

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

Parking

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

All-day parking permits may be purchased for \$4 from Plant Management on the ground floor of the Administration Building at 50 Sherburne Ave., north of the Capitol, across University Avenue. Cash or checks are accepted and correct change is appreciated. For more information, call (651) 297-3993.

Outdoor disability parking is available in Lot N, which is on the northwest side of the Capitol, and in Lot F. One spot is available in Lot AA.

The main disability entrance to the Capitol is on the northwest side of the building,

just off Lot N; there also are drop-off entrances on the south side under the front steps and on the northeast side of the building.

Since parking is limited during legislative sessions, busing may be easier. Freeway express bus service is available. Bus number 94B takes you to the Capitol and the State Office Building. Call the Transit Information Center at (612) 373-3333 for schedule and route information.

What to do

Tours

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

Tour guides lead the 45-minute tours on the hour Mondays through Fridays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.); Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. (last tour leaves at 2 p.m.); and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.). The tours begin at the Capitol's information desk at the end of the corridor to the right of the main entrance. Brochures in about 20 foreign languages also are available there.

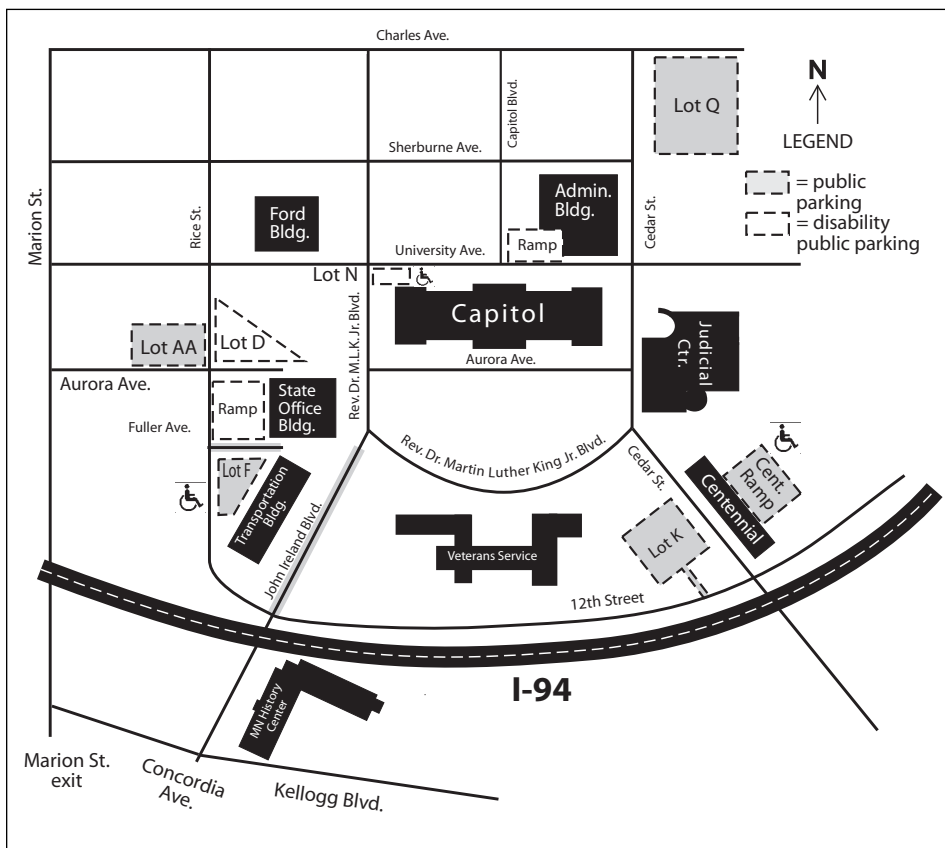
Tour rates vary. Generally, 45-minute tours for drop-in visitors to the Capitol are free of charge.

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

The society offers a number of specialized tours for educational groups ranging from preschool students to high school seniors. Admission for 45-minute educational group tours is \$2 per person. Tour participants may request customized tours that emphasize topics such as architecture, women's history, or the Civil War. During the legislative session, the society offers "Voice of the People: Your Role in Minnesota Government," a three-hour session for students in grades 9-12. Admission for the lengthier, focused educational group tours is \$4 per person.

Also, special tour events are scheduled throughout the year. Themes include "Art and Artists of the State Capitol" and "Shadows and Spirits of the State Capitol." Some of these events require admission fees; others are free. A special events guide is available upon request.

For more information about the tours and fee structure, or to make a reservation, call the Capitol Historic Site Program, (651) 296-2881.



Legislative sessions

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

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

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

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

Committee meetings

Visitors wanting to attend a committee meeting may call the committee hotlines for prerecorded messages with the meeting times and agendas for each day: House, (651) 296-9283; Senate, (651) 296-8088. Agendas for the week are available online at www.house.mn or www.senate.mn.

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

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

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

Groups and individuals wishing to testify before a committee should call the appropriate committee's legislative assistant well in advance of the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda. Committees prefer requests one week in advance but will accept later notification when unexpected issues appear on the com-

mittee schedule. A brochure containing tips on testifying at legislative committee hearings is available from the House Public Information Services Office.

Dining

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

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

Group visits

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

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

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

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

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

About security

Visitors to the Capitol need not be concerned or postpone a visit due to security concerns.

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

E-mail schedules

Anyone with e-mail can receive both House and Senate committee schedules.

To sign up to receive the House committee schedule, direct your Web browser to <http://www.house.mn/list/join.asp?listname=houseschedule> and fill out the subscription form on the Legislature's Web site.

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

Where to find information

House Public Information Services

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

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

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

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (651) 297-1338

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

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

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 296-2314

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

House Index Department

211 State Capitol (651) 296-6646

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

Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol
(651) 296-0504 or 1-888-234-1112

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

Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol (651) 296-0264

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

Education Finance 101

Formula for funding schools is complex, but changes could be coming

By RUTH DUNN

With a 1970-era AM transistor radio in one hand and a 2005 iPod® in the other, Ric Dressen recently made a point before a House committee about education funding. Just like the radio, the system worked fine for its time, he said, but now it's time to upgrade to a new way that is better suited to the present, like the iPod®.

"The system isn't broken yet, but cracks are showing. We need changes," said Dressen, superintendent of the Alexandria School District, who was chairman of an education finance report task force appointed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty. The 19-member task force came up with several recommendations they hope will achieve a fair, understandable, accountable 21st century education finance system for Minnesota.

The current education finance process is so complex that about "three people in the state understand it," jokes Dressen.

Big-ticket item

K-12 education is the big-ticket item in the state's budget, at \$5.9 billion a year. For every dollar the state spends, 40 cents goes to education. (The next biggest chunk of the budget is for health care at 28 percent of the budget.)

The federal government gives the responsibility for funding education to states. Minnesota uses revenue from the sales tax and income tax to pay school districts about 73 percent of what it costs to educate a child. School districts contribute local money, mainly from property taxes, to fund about 20 percent of the cost. The federal government contributes about 5 percent of the total cost mainly for special education and for the school meal program. Other funding pays 2 percent.

Most of the state money goes to school districts on a per pupil basis. Since 2002-03, each district has received a base amount of \$4,601 for each pupil unit. Districts receive less money for kindergarten students (who count as .5 pupil units) and the most for high school students (1.3 units).

Enrollment is important

Because most state aid to schools is paid on a per pupil basis, enrollment is important. If students switch school districts, they take their state aid with them.

School enrollment peaked in Minnesota in 1972 and enrollment began to decline in the mid-1980s. A baby boomlet brought enrollment back up in 1998, but it's leveling off again. Nearly 80 percent of school districts have declining enrollment. The only regions of the state realizing an increase in students are east-central Minnesota (8 percent) and the Twin Cities metropolitan area (1 percent).

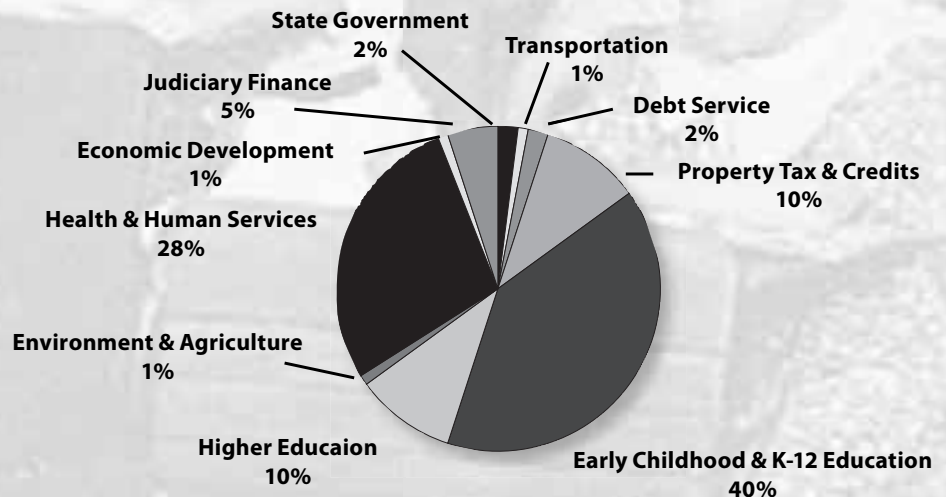
More than half of all students in the state live in the seven-county metropolitan area. About 70 percent of all students in the state attend the 10 largest school districts.

Districts are unique

There are 343 school districts in the state and each is unique. Some are densely populated; others are not. Some have lots of commercial and industrial businesses that generate lots of tax money; others do not. Some districts have many students from poor families while others have higher-income students. Other districts — both urban and rural — have students new to this country that need to learn English.

Since all school districts are not equal, the state makes funding fairer by paying additional money for some factors. For example, in 2003-04 if a school had a high percentage of students in poverty (as revealed by the number of families who qualify for free or reduced price lunch), then compensatory aid is paid. Schools within the same school district may receive very different amounts of aid. For ex-

General Fund Forecast Expenditures
Fiscal Year 2006 Base



ample in 2003-04, Bethune Elementary School in Minneapolis had 91 percent of its students on free or reduced school meals so it received \$867,000 in compensatory money. Located in a more affluent part of Minneapolis, Barton Elementary School had 20 percent of its students qualify for free or reduced school lunch so it received \$61,000 in compensatory aid.

Referendum money

It may boggle some minds that voters are willing to increase their taxes to support their local schools, but they do. The number of school districts asking for operating and/or bond referendums reached an all-time high in the mid-1990s.

Successful operating referendums provide

additional money for ongoing expenses of school districts, like teaching positions and programs. Operating referendums are expected to raise \$520 million for schools in 2006.

Money raised through bond referendums pays for renovation of buildings and new construction. This is also a way school districts have gained money for technology. School districts are spending about \$600 million per year to repay these bonds.

Special education

In 2003, 114,017 Minnesota students (about 11 percent of the total) received special education services for their disabilities that include such things as specific learning disability,

emotion behavior disorder, speech language impairment or a mild/moderate handicap.

A few decades ago, the federal government indicated it would fund 40 percent of special education costs, but that has never happened. Currently, it funds about 17 percent of costs. Meanwhile, special education costs have dramatically increased as more students have been identified as needing services.

Changes in education finance

Education will be front and center this legislative session, predicts Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), chair of the House Education Policy and Reform Committee, because, “Minnesota values education; it’s a shared value.”

Reform is also likely. The word *reform* was added to the name of the House Education Policy Committee this year to reflect that emphasis.

“Education is always one of the most important topics in the legislative session,” according to Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), chair of the House Education Finance Committee. She says there is a lot of pent up desire for more money for schools this year because the per pupil amount the state pays to districts has not been increased for a couple of years. The governor and both the House and the Senate have suggested increases to the per pupil aid.

“In this age of information, the state or country that has the best educated work force is the one that will succeed,” said Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato), a retired English teacher who is a member of both House education committees. “The last election showed that people don’t want their schools compromised or jeopardized in any way shape or form. Legislators who did not hear that should step aside.”

The School Finance Task Force believes that education finance should be connected to learning versus the way current funding seems to be based on available revenue, said Dressen.

In a concluding letter to Pawlenty in July 2004, the task force urged a public commitment to education. “Once Minnesota’s prosperity was tied to materials and crops that came from the ground. Now, and increasingly, the state’s well being appears linked to resources that come from the mind. Thus, we conclude that a sustained public commitment to enhancing the state’s human capital — education — is the key to Minnesota’s successful future.”

Sparsest District

District 363
South Koochiching
1,546 population
1,532 sq. miles
311 pupils

Geographically Largest District

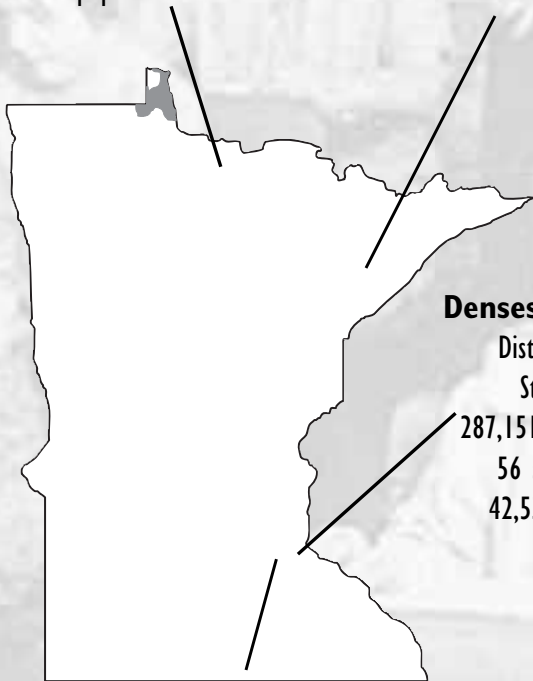
District 2142
St. Louis County
18,435 population
4,201 sq. miles
2,406 pupils

Densest District

District 625
St. Paul
287,151 population
56 sq. miles
42,538 pupils

Geographically Smallest District

District 282
St. Anthony-New Brighton
9,687 population
2.59 sq. miles
1,526 pupils



Capturing history one frame at a time

Nearly three decades of political photos now on display



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Rep. Wayne Simoneau puts a bag over his head to show his lack of enthusiasm for the environmental trust fund during a hearing of the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee on March 29, 1988. He did vote yes.

Since 1977, Tom Olmscheid has captured the events and people in the Capitol Complex in photographs.

Many of these images hang in his State Office Building office, where few can enjoy what Olmscheid sees through his photogenic eye. For the next month, however, many of his works will be on display in the Legislative Reference Library.

Picking close to 40 photos to exhibit was more personal than historical. Olmscheid, the chief photographer with the House Public Information Services Office, chose pictures that he thought “were significant over the years,” yet he was careful to maintain a nonpartisan balance. He wished he could have displayed

“more like 200 photos,” but he covered the cost of framing the photos.

The selection includes a photo of the military color guard bringing the flag-draped casket of former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey up the Minnesota Capitol steps to lie in state. It was one of the first events he photographed.

Another shows former Rep. Henry Kalis as he slept outside the door of former Secretary of State Joan Growe. Kalis, with pillow and makeshift bed, was the first person to file for public office each election year until his retirement in 2002.

Other Olmscheid photos have appeared in various publications throughout the years.

His photograph, “May Township Hall,” was selected as one of the “Best Pictures of the Year” in *Time* magazine.

Olmscheid started as a House page in 1976, and became the House’s first nonpartisan photographer in the then informational and education services departments in 1977.

(P. JANOVEC)

Olmscheid’s exhibit, “Twenty Five Year Journal of Photography” will be on display through Feb. 25 in the Legislative Reference Library which is located on the sixth floor of the State Office Building in room 645. Hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday - Thursday, and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday.

Side-by-side civility

One minority, majority party member sit together on House floor

By Ruth Dunn

A unique seating arrangement has resulted from the 68-66 split between political parties in the House. One lone Republican now sits on the DFL side of the House chamber.

Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) joked about his situation during the opening session on Jan. 4 when he referred to “my colleagues on this side of the aisle.”

Olson is seated next to Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL-Mpls). Each jokes that he is the only member of his party seated next to a member of the opposite party.

Not only are they political opposites with Olson as the conservative and Hornstein as the liberal, but Olson is from a rural area while Hornstein represents an urban district. It’s an interesting juxtaposition at a time where there’s lots of talk about being bipartisan and getting

along with members of the opposite party. Some may see the aisle as a great divide, but both Olson and Hornstein seem comfortable with the arrangement. To them, it’s no big deal.

As the chamber seating arrangement was being set up, Olson volunteered to sit on the DFL side. Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville), who handled the House seating, thinks Olson was a good choice because he’s an experienced legislator who does not need to be seated next to others in his party as a more freshman member would. “It will work fine,” she said.

Olson has a bipartisan background. His grandfather was a founding member of the DFL party in Sherburne County many years ago. Olson agrees with George Washington, who listed partisan politics as the worst enemy of the country in his farewell address. “We should save partisan politics for the campaign,

not for the House,” said Olson.

Hornstein said the way for people of different parties to get along is to identify what they have in common and work from there. He’s amused that when he and Holberg had a press conference last fall to highlight issues about Interstate 35, media representatives were most interested in the fact that a DFLer and a Republican were able to work together. “That’s what they thought was news,” he said.

Olson says being on the DFL side is an interesting perspective. “I expect we’ll gain some insights from each other.” In the House Local Government Committee, which he chairs, Olson set up a unique arrangement with Republicans seated alternately with DFLers instead of on opposite sides of the table. Hornstein, who serves on the committee, applauds Olson’s innovative idea.

Hornstein says legislators don’t spend enough time getting to know each other, especially when they’re in different parties. He and Olson will get to know each other better just because they are desk neighbors. “We can be the model, how to disagree but be civil, respectful and honor the institution,” he said.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

They are political opposites, but Rep. Frank Hornstein, left, and Rep. Mark Olson are bridging the partisan gap.

A new challenge

Cybart goes from the military to the State Capitol

By **MIKE COOK**

Excited, nervous and confident is how Rep. Lloyd Cybart (R-Apple Valley) described his feelings just before session began.



Rep. Lloyd Cybart

“It’s kind of like the military where you get a new assignment and you just pull through the main gate and you haven’t been to that base before. You’re excited about the new situation, but there’s nervousness at the same time wondering if you’re going to do the right thing and excel. I’ve done well in the past and I’ve done a lot of homework for this.” The Air Force veteran has had to purchase two new file cabinets for his office to hold all the literature he has received.

But it’s not like Cybart is starting from square one. After working behind the scenes on Chris Gerlach’s campaigns, Cybart jumped

at the opportunity when Gerlach, who had represented District 37A for three terms, was elected to the Senate in a July special election.

“I spent 20 years in the active military and all those decisions the politicians made affected me quite a bit,” Cybart said. “I always had an interest in it and thought about doing it later in life, but the opportunity presented itself so I thought now is the time.”

Cybart said that he and his wife, Heike, met with party leaders to discuss the opportunity that would keep him rooted in one place. “After she followed me around the military for all those years I kind of owe her.”

Cybart said that education and transportation are among his top priorities. His constituency includes parts of two suburban school districts, including the fourth largest in the state.

“I’ve met with many teachers, superintendents and principals and we cannot continue to hold funding flat,” he said, saying that he hopes for more than an inflationary increase.

DISTRICT 37A

2002 population: 36,915
Largest city: Burnsville
County: Dakota
Location: southern Twin Cities metropolitan area
Top concerns: Education and transportation

“I spent 20 years in the active military and all those decisions the politicians made affected me quite a bit.”

— Rep. Lloyd Cybart

The Cedar Avenue rapid bus transit is among the top transportation priorities for the man who has run in three marathons. “Gerlach started some good things on that and I’m going to finish it up this year,” Cybart said.

Other priorities include accessible and affordable health care and prescriptions, keeping habitual sex offenders permanently away from children, no new taxes and the promotion of government spending accountability.

Health care advocate

Fritz brings lifelong compassion to St. Paul

By **MATT WETZEL**

Rep. Patti Fritz (DFL-Faribault) learned about politics from her father, Mike Casby, sitting with him and his friends, as they would debate issues at the kitchen table in Northfield.



Rep. Patti Fritz

“He was opinionated. It was always the issues of the day. I knew when I was 6 years old who my representative was. He read the paper and he listened to the news,” she said.

Fritz developed a decidedly populist bent to her politics, looking to help the cause of workers and those with low and moderate-incomes. She cut her teeth working with the late Paul Wellstone on those issues, who at the time was a professor at Carleton College in Northfield.

She eventually became a licensed practical nurse and went to work at St. Lucas Care Center, a nursing home in Faribault. There she helped organize the Service Employees International Union Local 113, and became an activist for the nursing home industry. “My passion is people and helping them have opportunities,” she said.

Fritz, a mother of five and grandmother of 17, initially ran for the House in 2002 against Rep. Lynda Boudreau. The local firefighters union had encouraged her to run. She lost in that election, but tried again in 2004, and won by 347 votes.

She sees jobs and health care as the key issues in her district. “I’ve worked with people who don’t have health care. They don’t qualify (because they don’t meet income guidelines) and they don’t want to go to the welfare department to ask for assistance because they’re afraid they’ll lose their dignity. I know people

DISTRICT 26B

Population: 36,496
Largest City: Faribault
Counties: Rice, Steele
Location: south-central Minnesota
Top Concern: Jobs and health care

“My passion is people and helping them have opportunities.”

— Rep. Patti Fritz

that are working for \$5.50 an hour. I know people who have those jobs without health care benefits,” she said.

She is determined to be an advocate for those people and others who can’t afford paid lobbyists. “Minimum wage gives you a minimum life. We see no opportunities, no affordable (college) education, no college scholarships.”

If she could have submitted the first bill of the session it would have been a proposal to expand the medium security state prison in Faribault, which is one of the region’s largest employers.

Parking headaches

When it comes to big issues at the Capitol — parking tops the list

By Ruth Dunn

Tell people you're going to the Capitol and chances are they'll respond, "Where are you going to park?"

Parking can be challenging, especially when the House and Senate are in session and there are more than 10,000 legislators, state employees, visitors, lobbyists and reporters looking for parking spaces.

Some insider information is useful in finding places to park. Frequent visitors to the Capitol know where to park. Problems arise for infrequent visitors. "It's like season ticket holders to a sporting or arts event. They always know where to park," said Bernie Steele, facilities support supervisor.

Parking is the biggest headache, bar none, of his job, said Shawn Peterson, chief sergeant-at-arms for the House. "Parking in the Capitol area is just plain difficult."

Like many capitols around the country, this Capitol is built where there is no room for expansion. Also, the Capitol Complex area

The Capitol Complex area was developed at a time when there was no thought that someday nearly everyone would drive a car to work.

was developed at a time when there was no thought that someday nearly everyone would drive a car to work.

Adding to the problem is the increase in people who work in the Capitol area and those who visit. "We can't keep up with the growth," said Peterson. He predicts the parking situation will worsen with the construction of two new office buildings in the Capitol complex — the agriculture building and the human services building. "Neither has adequate parking as part of their design." Redevelopment in the area has also taken away parking areas. For example, the new League of Minnesota Cities building at the corner of Rice Street and University Avenue was constructed on a former parking lot.

Still, it would not be good to pave paradise

and put up a parking lot. "We want green spaces and gardens in the Capitol area," said Peterson. "We don't want to turn the grassy areas into parking lots."

When driving to the Capitol, the best strategy is to arrive early so there is time to look for a space, he said. "Don't expect to find one right away."

Go first to Lot AA, located across Rice

Parking continued on page 23

Prime parking problem Who should park in front of the State Capitol?

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) eyes those hooded parking meters in front of the Capitol and sees potential public parking. For 25 years, she and others have tried to take the 70 spaces away from senators and turn them into public parking.

"Many ran for office on the issue of accountability saying they welcome people to the Capitol," she said in a recent House debate. "But have you ever tried to direct people where to park?"

The most visible, accessible parking spaces are in front of the Capitol. "They're meant to be open to the public, that's why they are metered," she said. Senators have other options for parking including the ramp behind the Centennial Office Building just to the east, and the lot behind the Capitol. "People should be able to drive up to the Capitol, park in front and go in and see their legislator," Kahn said.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) said he's voted in favor of the proposal every year it's been on the floor since he was elected.

"It's been a House-Senate dispute for years about who gets those parking spaces." Seifert suggested the proposal be submitted to the House State Government Finance Committee, which he chairs and to which Kahn is a member.

Kahn said that approach has been tried many times and hasn't worked. "It's time for a new approach," she said to explain why she pushed for an amendment during the first week the House was in session. "An affirmative vote would cause the Senate to distinctly take notice."

The amendment failed during the Jan. 6 floor session in the House.

(R. DUNN)



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

When the Legislature is in session, the meters in front of the State Capitol are reserved for senators. Some believe the spaces should be available to the public year-round.

Burdick in bronze



The bronze bust of a dignified wavy-haired man that greets visitors to the House Chamber was placed in 1990 as a tribute to Edward A. Burdick, chief clerk of the House from 1967-2004. It was

commissioned to honor his parliamentary expertise, stately manner and decades of public service.

The artist was Minnesota sculptor Paul Granlund (1925-2003), who produced some 650 national and international commissions in his lifetime, including the bronze bust of the late Sen. Nicholas D. Coleman that was placed on the Capitol first floor in 1983.

Burdick is the only living Minnesotan whose likeness stands as Capitol sculpture.

“It’s no secret that there was some criticism for installing a bronze bust of someone who has not yet died or at least someone who has not retired,” Burdick said at the unveiling ceremony, according to a transcript provided by the Minnesota Historical Society. “Maybe we have a problem because I am not prepared to



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

The bronze bust of former Chief Clerk of the House Ed Burdick stands outside the House chamber.

announce either of those events today.”

The transcript reflects Burdick’s sense of humor, and desire to share the honor with legislative staff and the others working behind the scenes. It also displays his grasp

of institutional history and his love of the Capitol building.

“The first time I saw this magnificent building I fell in love with it, and with the honorable people working here, and I’m still in awe of this building and its occupants,” Burdick said.

“There is a reason that bust of Ed is out there today,” said former Speaker of the House Robert Vanasek at Burdick’s retirement tribute Jan. 10. “We proposed during my time here that it would only be fitting to have that bust for Ed while he was still alive to appreciate it and so that he would know of all of our appreciation for those years of service. And in spite of the opposition of the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board who was vociferously opposed to it, we finally pointed out that that was House space and if it’s House space we will do with it how we saw fit. So, we held a fundraiser and it was through the contributions of members, both present and past, that bust got erected. And the fact that he is the only living Minnesotan to have had such an honor I think is a distinction that he truly deserves.”

(N. Wood)

What’s on the Web Talkin’ ‘bout My Bills (My Bills)

The legislative Web site provides personalized bill tracking for House and Senate legislation within the current biennium. MyBills, as the service is called, requires an easy one-time registration of a username and password (www.house.leg.state.mn.us/leg/billslogin.asp).

The system keeps track of House and Senate bills by bill number, subject or author. Users enjoy the benefit of viewing bill status with items of significant current action highlighted. The status is updated daily, and users can modify

their lists at anytime. Lists are retained throughout the legislative biennium.



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231 Capitol.....296-2344
Voice mail/order bills296-2343
Index, Senate
110 Capitol.....296-5560

Thursday, January 20

HF263—Abrams (R)

Higher Education Finance

University of Minnesota football stadium state support process provided and money appropriated.

HF264—Slawik (DFL)

Education Finance

Early childhood learning and child protection facilities funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF265—Hoppe (R)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Natural resources and environment project capital improvements funding provided for specified projects, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF266—Sailer (DFL)

Education Finance

Independent School District No. 38, Red Lake, capital improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF267—Knoblach (R)

Higher Education Finance

St. Cloud State University capital improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF268—Knoblach (R)

Higher Education Finance

St. Cloud Technical College capital improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF269—Knoblach (R)

Higher Education Finance

St. Cloud State University capital improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF270—Knoblach (R)

Higher Education Finance

St. Cloud State University capital improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF271—Brod (R)

Civil Law & Elections

Presidential electors obligated to vote for pledged candidate by public and spoken ballot.

HF272—Zellers (R)

Transportation Finance

Marked Trunk highway 610 segment completion as a four-lane freeway funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF273—Welti (DFL)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Olmsted County; non-motorized riding and hiking trail funding provided and money appropriated.

HF274—Dorman (R)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Blazing Star Trail segment funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF275—Juhnke (DFL)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Let's Go Fishing grant provided to promote opportunities for fishing and money appropriated.

HF276—Magnus (R)

Transportation Finance

Town road sign replacement program developed, and money appropriated.

HF277—Eken (DFL)

Transportation

Becker County; highway turnback of jurisdiction provided.

HF278—Nornes (R)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Prairie Wetlands Environmental Learning Center expansion funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF279—Magnus (R)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Minnesota River Basin Projects, Inc., grant provided for floodplain management and money appropriated.

HF280—Davids (R)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Rural Finance Authority loan funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF281—Pelowski (DFL)

Jobs & Economic

Opportunity Policy & Finance

Winona; Great River Shakespeare Festival facilities pre-design funding provided, bonds issued, matching funds required and money appropriated.

HF282—Mariani (DFL)

Jobs & Economic

Opportunity Policy & Finance

St. Paul; river's edge improvements and redevelopment of a public park on Raspberry Island funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF283—Zellers (R)

Jobs & Economic

Opportunity Policy & Finance

Minneapolis; Minnesota Shubert Center funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF284—Thao (DFL)

Jobs & Economic

Opportunity Policy & Finance

St. Paul; land acquisition and contamination remediation grant provided relating to the Pierce Butler Corridor, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF285—Marquart (DFL)

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Breckenridge and Oakport Township flood hazard mitigation funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF286—Hoppe (R)

Regulated Industries

Brewpubs and small brewers license fees and production levels conformity provided, temporary small brewers license authorized, off-sale of growlers authorized, sampling provisions modified and other municipal licenses modified.

HF287—Smith (R)

Ways & Means

State spending prohibited from increasing at a greater rate than the Consumer Price Index by proposed constitutional amendment.

HF288—Smith (R)

Civil Law & Elections

Education quality and teacher and principal protection act adopted regulating the liability of employees of educational entities.

HF289—Smith (R)

Civil Law & Elections

Compensation for forced labor actions limitation waived for persons forced to perform labor between 1929 and 1945 by the governments, allies, business entities or sympathizers of Germany or Japan.

HF290—Smith (R)

Civil Law & Elections

Grandparent visitation rights provided on behalf of the child, grandparent rights expanded and mediation required.

HF291—Sykora (R)

Education Finance

Community education facility levy authorized.

HF292—Brod (R)

Civil Law & Elections

Primary election provision requiring 10 percent of the last general election votes in order to nominate candidates repealed.

HF293—Mahoney (DFL)

Jobs & Economic

Opportunity Policy & Finance

St. Paul; land acquisition and contamination remediation grant provided relating to the Phalen Corridor, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF294—Latz (DFL)

Education Finance

Perpich Center for Arts Education capital improvements grant provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF295—Davnie (DFL)

Civil Law & Elections

Special School District No. 1 elected school board membership specified.

HF296—Abeler (R)**Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Oliver Kelly Farm land acquisition funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF297—Johnson, S. (DFL)**Health Policy & Finance**

Senior nutrition funding restored, targeted senior nutrition grants provided and money appropriated.

HF298—Peterson, N. (R)**Transportation**

Household goods movers exempted from fixed compensation requirement when doing certain charitable work.

HF299—Johnson, S. (DFL)**Health Policy & Finance**

Living-at-home/block nurse programs expanded, annual funding increased and money appropriated.

HF300—Davids (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Water management project funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF301—Mahoney (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Fort Snelling improvement funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF302—Lesch (DFL)**Taxes**

Ramsey County; library levies on tax statements and Truth in Taxation notices separately stated.

HF303—Rukavina (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

County environmental trust fund deposits alternative investments authorized.

HF304—Sieben (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

Game and fish license fee credit card payment authorized.

HF305—Murphy (DFL)**Taxes**

Proctor; local sales taxes authorized.

HF306—Murphy (DFL)**Taxes**

Proctor; city lodging tax authorized.

HF307—Cornish (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development**

Cervidae regulation by Board of Animal Health provided.

HF308—Westrom (R)**Taxes**

Lakes Area Economic Development Authority tax levy authorized.

HF309—Zellers (R)**Taxes**

Long-term care insurance income taxation credit adjusted.

HF310—Bernardy (DFL)**Transportation**

Ramsey County property interests transfer authorized.

HF311—Seifert (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Lake Redwood Reservoir Reclamation and Enhancement project funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF312—Hosch (DFL)**Education Finance**

School health and safety program expansion to include school safety costs associated with student support services authorized.

HF313—Hornstein (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

Street utility fee imposition by cities authorized.

HF314—Lesch (DFL)**Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Retired court commissioner appointment to perform judicial duties in district court authorized.

HF315—Slawik (DFL)**Transportation**

Traffic report contract between commissioner of transportation and KBEM radio required.

HF316—Slawik (DFL)**Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Membership travel contracts regulated.

HF317—Blaine (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Minnesota veterans of the Global War on Terrorism bonus payment provided, bonds authorized and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF318—Blaine (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development**

Board of Animal Health official laboratory provided.

HF319—Powell (R)**Transportation**

Child restraint system required for motor vehicle passengers less than 9 years old.

HF320—Anderson, B. (R)**Transportation Finance**

Transportation certificates of assignment for funding of transportation provided.

HF321—Kelliher (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

J.D. Rivers urban agricultural awareness center funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF322—Nelson, P. (R)**Transportation Finance**

Rush Line Corridor Busway funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF323—Paulsen (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Legislative sessions restricted to odd-numbered years.

HF324—Solberg (DFL)**Agriculture & Rural Development**

Commodity check-off fee eliminated for specified producers of wild rice.

HF325—Solberg (DFL)**Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Protective agent license experience requirement exemption provided for traffic escorts.

HF326—Lieder (DFL)**Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 595, East Grand Forks, exercise of remaining levy authority for disability access projects authorized.

HF327—Heidgerken (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

State park improvement bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF328—Heidgerken (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Stearns County; regional trail bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF329—Lillie (DFL)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Yard waste compost site spore level study funding provided and money appropriated.

HF330—Lillie (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

Ramsey and Washington counties; lake links trail development and roadway rehabilitation engineering design funding provided and money appropriated.

HF331—Lillie (DFL)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Yard waste compost site odor level study funding provided and money appropriated.

HF332—Lillie (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Maplewood; Bruentrup farm restoration funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF333—Brod (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

State senator staggered terms of office provided through proposed constitutional amendment.

HF334—Lillie (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

Ramsey County; McKnight Road and Highway 36 interchange project funding provided bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF335—Cybart (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Dakota County Technical College capital improvement funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF336—DeLaForest (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

English designated as official state language.

HF337—Nelson, P. (R)**Health Policy & Finance**

Chisago County; nursing facilities designation as metro for purposes of determining reimbursement rates provided.

HF338—Howes (R)**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Public Facilities Authority wastewater infrastructure funding and other program bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF339—Howes (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Reforestation funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF340—Howes (R)**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Walker Area Community Center grant provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF341—Howes (R)**Civil Law & Elections**

Sexually dangerous and psychopathic persons civil commitment determination procedure modified, attorney general and county pursuit of certain commitments required and individual commitment to government facilities required.

HF342—Clark (DFL)**Taxes**

Minneapolis; redevelopment tax increment financing district duration limitation removed.

HF343—Clark (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Minneapolis; former Sears site improvement funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF344—Howes (R)**State Government Finance**

Capitol grounds workers memorial construction funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF345—Solberg (DFL)**Education Policy & Reform**

Education employee recognition programs provided.

HF346—Dempsey (R)**Transportation Finance**

Port development assistance funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF347—Lanning (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Minnesota State University Moorhead and Minnesota State Community and Technical College-Moorhead, capital improvements funding provided; bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF348—DeLaForest (R)**Transportation Finance**

Motor vehicle sales tax revenues reallocated.

HF349—Kelliher (DFL)**Health Policy & Finance**

Grave markers funding provided for unmarked graves of deceased residents of state hospitals or regional treatment centers.

HF350—Slawik (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Senators provided staggered four-year terms and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF351—Slawik (DFL)**Transportation**

Vehicles required to be driven in the right-hand lane and exceptions provided.

HF352—Dorman (R)**Capital Investment**

State agencies and departments capital improvements funding provided including higher education funding, previous bond authorizations adjusted, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF353—Paymar (DFL)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

St. Paul; Highland Park pavilion renovation funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF354—Cox (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Conservation reserve enhancement program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF355—Finstad (R)**Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 88, New Ulm, authorized to use health and safety revenue for mechanical air handling system appurtenances.

HF356—Eastlund (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Anoka-Ramsey Community College in Cambridge capital improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF357—Ruth (R)**Local Government**

Local government filing and recording laws technical changes provided.

HF358—Ruth (R)**Local Government**

County document recording fees and standards provided.

HF359—Sertich (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Central Range Economic Development Initiative project pre-design funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF360—Paymar (DFL)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

St. Paul; park and trail improvements in the area above Meeker Island historic site funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF361—Juhnke (DFL)**Health Policy & Finance**

Willmar Regional Treatment Center master plan and reuse study recommendations funded including methamphetamine treatment facilities, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF362—DeLaForest (R)**Transportation**

Single appeal process provided under municipal consent law for interstate and non-interstate trunk highways.

HF363—Davnie (DFL)**Education Policy & Reform**

Middle school students provided access to higher grade level courses.

HF364—Lesch (DFL)**Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Methamphetamine precursor drugs regulated; retail education program required; restitution, property restrictions and criminal penalties imposed; methamphetamine laboratory cleanup fund established and money appropriated.

HF365—Hortman (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

Trunk Highway 610 completion funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF366—Howes (R)**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Horseback riding trails user fee established and money appropriated.

HF367—Kohls (R)**Civil Law & Elections**

Defeasible estates provided, residential purchase agreement cancellations modified and foreclosure advice notice amended.

HF368—Thissen (DFL)**Civil Law & Elections**

Probate venue, trustee powers and omitted beneficiary provisions modified and clarified.

HF369—Thissen (DFL)**Civil Law & Elections**

Minnesota Common Interest Ownership Act modified.

HF370—Solberg (DFL)**Local Government**

Shooting range generally accepted operating practices defined relating to local ordinances, closing and relocation, noise standards, public access and nuisance liability.

HF371—Howes (R)**Environment & Natural Resources**

Big game hunting prohibition on use of .30 caliber M1 carbine cartridge repealed.

HF372—Westerberg (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Blaine, Spring Lake Park and Mounds View emergency employees authorized to become members of the Public Employees Retirement Association.

HF373—Anderson, I. (DFL)**Regulated Industries**

Commerce Department required to present a plan to expand local calling areas to include secondary school attendance areas.

2005 - 2006 House Committee Chairs

Agriculture and Rural Development



Gregory M. Davids
R-Preston

Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Finance



Dennis Ozment
R-Rosemount

Capital Investment



Dan Dorman
R-Albert Lea

Civil Law and Elections



Jeff Johnson
R-Plymouth

Commerce and Financial Institutions



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Paul Kohls
R-Victoria

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R-Excelsior

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Education Policy and Reform



Mark Buesgens
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Environment and Natural Resources



Tom Hackbarth
R-Cedar

Ethics



Sondra Erickson
R-Princeton

Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs



Kathy Tingelstad
R-Andover

Health Policy and Finance



Fran Bradley
R-Rochester

Health Care Cost Containment Division*



Jim Abeler
R-Anoka

Higher Education Finance



Bud Nornes
R-Fergus Falls

Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance



Bob Gunther
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Public Safety Policy and Finance

Local Government



Mark Olson
R-Big Lake



Steve Smith
R-Mound

Regulated Industries



Torrey Westrom
R-Elbow Lake

Gaming Division*



Andrew "Andy" Westerberg
R-Blaine

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Rules and Legislative Administration



Erik Paulsen
R-Eden Prairie

State Government Finance



Marty Seifert
R-Marshall

Taxes



Philip Krinkie
R-Shoreview

Property and Local Tax Division*



Ray Vandever
R-Forest Lake

**Property and Local Tax is a division of the Taxes Committee*

Transportation



Ron Erhardt
R-Edina

Transportation Finance



Mary Liz Holberg
R-Lakeville

Ways and Means



Jim Knoblach
R-St. Cloud

Parking continued from page 17

Street from the State Office Building because it's the largest public lot. Lot F, on the Rice Street side of the transportation building, has some meters. If you're lucky, you might find on-street metered parking, but you better have lots of quarters and plug it for longer than you expect. There's one floor of public parking in the ramp behind the Centennial Office Building near Cedar and 12th streets in the southeast corner of the Capitol Complex. Peterson suggests car-pooling as an option.

If Peterson could redesign the area for better parking, he'd have a six- or seven-story ramp with 800 parking slots built on Lot AA, which

now has 70-80 spots.

Visitors aren't the only ones who pay for parking; everyone does. Legislators and employees contract for spaces and the fee is taken out of their paychecks.

Officers from Capitol Security enforce parking regulations to protect the spots of those who pay. "When people pay for a spot, they should get it," said Lt. Mary Schrader. Officers regularly patrol parking areas so anyone who is parked incorrectly is likely to be ticketed or even towed. She sees lots of violators in the 30-minute zones close to buildings. "They're designed for quick drop off and pick up but some people try to stay there longer."

A two-page handout on visiting the Capitol is available online at www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/Come2Cap.pdf.

If you know ahead of time that you'll be coming to the Capitol, you can order a day pass for \$4 through the Department of Administration and have it mailed to you. For more information, call 651-296-6800.

Forget about the whole parking problem by taking the city bus, which brings riders right to the Capitol area. For more information call Metro Transit at (612) 373-3333 or www.metrotransit.org for more information.



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

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota women prisoners

Total inmates in state prison system, as of July 1, 2004.....	8,333
Number that are female.....	490
As percent of all prisoners	5.9
Nationwide, percent of state prisoners in 2001 that were women	6.6
Percent in 1995.....	6
Increase, as percent, of women in state and federal prisons between 1980 and 2003	822
Percent increase in number of female prisoners in Minnesota from 2000 to 2004.....	42
Year first institution for women opened in Shakopee	1920
Year the current prison opened across the road from the former prison.....	1986
Capacity, including day beds.....	550
Inmates on Nov. 15, 2004.....	448
On July 1, 2004.....	432
Short-term female offenders, on July 1, 2004, serving the remainder of their sentence at a work farm, workhouse, county jail or other place authorized by law	38
Projected women's prison population in 2010.....	672
Of female offenders sentenced for a crime, percent in 2003 that received prison time.....	11
Percent in 1991.....	6
Females incarcerated on July 1, 2004 doing time for drug offenses, as percent.....	39
Of those, percent that were related to methamphetamine	53
Females incarcerated in 1991 doing time for drug offenses, as percent.....	22.1
Percent of July 1, 2004 female inmates sentenced for person offenses	33
Percent for property offenses.....	20
Percent of females incarcerated in 2003 that were sentenced for theft.....	13.4
In 1991, as percent	26.7
Percent of females incarcerated in 2003 that were sentenced for assault.....	4.5
In 1991, as percent	8.1
Of 2003 female inmates, percent incarcerated on initial commitment.....	44
Percent doing time for probation revocation	37
Average female prison sentence duration, in months, in 2003.....	35
In 1997	40
In 1991	32
Department of Corrections employees in 2004 that were female, as percent.....	38
Of those, percent that were correctional officers	29

Sources: Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission, Minnesota Department of Corrections, U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics and The Sentencing Project.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For general information, call:
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