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# SESSION Weekly

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INSIDE: WEATHER FACTS, KEEPING WATERS CLEAN, BRIDGING THE PARTISAN AISLE, MORE

This Week's Bill Introductions HF3658-HF3917

# Session Weekly

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

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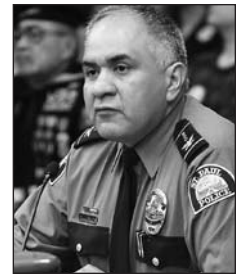
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On the cover: A Capitol visitor descends the cantilevered staircase March 22. This unsupported staircase, designed by architect Cass Gilbert, was considered state-of-the-art technology when the Capitol was constructed more than 100 years ago.

—Photo by: Sarah Stacke



# Bridging the aisle

Bipartisan efforts look for legislative reform



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL BATTAGLIA

By NICK BUSSE

**W**hen a session marked by partisan squabbling and budget deadlock ended in a historic partial government shutdown last year, many legislators vowed that it would never happen again.

Some want to make sure it doesn't.

[Rep. Kathy Tingelstad](#) (R-Andover) and [Rep. Diane Loeffler](#) (DFL-Mpls) spearhead a bipartisan coalition looking to change the way the Legislature does business. They say a growing movement among both House and Senate members is pushing for legislative reform.

"It's across party lines, it's across freshmen to senior representatives, it's chairmen and rank-and-file," Loeffler says. "I think we have a broad cross-section of people who have shown an ongoing commitment to do our work better and more efficiently."

A core group of pro-reform senators and representatives has been working together on the issue, including participation in a two-day legislative effectiveness forum at the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs in February.

The impetus for change has grown out of last year's highly public budget debacle. At the height of frustrations during the summer special session, Loeffler and Tingelstad put out a call to fellow House members and staff for ideas to make the Legislature more efficient. In the fall they compiled the responses into an Internet survey and asked House members to rank the ideas.

According to Tingelstad, approximately half of the House's 134 members responded to the survey. She said the responses were split almost evenly between Republicans and Democrats, and that out of some 60 ideas, 36 were generally agreed upon as good candidates. One of the most popular was continuing appropriations.

"It's the most direct problem-solving tool in making sure we don't have a government shutdown again," Tingelstad says of continuing appropriations — keeping the current state budget in effect until a new one is passed. This ensures that a budget deadlock in the Legislature won't cause a government shutdown, as was the case last year. However, critics warn this does not force the Legislature to get its work done.

Other ideas covered by Loeffler and Tingelstad's list range from the relatively minor — such as creating a common lunch hour for House and Senate members to socialize with each other and discuss policy issues — to the fairly radical, such as creating a unicameral (one-house) legislature like Nebraska.

**First Reading continued on page 4**

## First Reading continued from page 3

Don't hold your breath on the unicameral idea. But of the more than 20 legislative reform bills that have been filed so far this session, several common themes have emerged: continuing budget appropriations; forfeiting legislators' salaries and/or per diem during special sessions; establishing more efficient legislative schedules; and increasing communication between legislators in various ways, such as creating training forums.

Loeffler says that some of the other, smaller ideas have already been informally implemented in some cases. For example, many committees now allow their members to choose their own seats during meetings (thereby giving them the opportunity to get to know members of the other party).

Tingelstad hopes to see legislation passed this year that would put scheduling rules into state statute. As an example, she says creating a transitional budget and staff for newly elected governors and then requiring a new governor to submit his or her initiatives in early January or February would allow legislators to get a head start on the session.

Other legislative reform ideas that may come up this session are many, but their overall goal is clear.

"We're putting other backstops in place that should make it so that we really should not ever have to go into special session," Tingelstad says.

Legislators aren't the only state leaders pushing for change at the Capitol.

In March, Gov. Tim Pawlenty announced his "performance pay for politicians" initiative, whereby legislators and the governor would have to forfeit part of their salaries if they did not pass a budget on time during odd-numbered years of the legislative biennium.

"I think pay-for-performance is a good idea because it links results with accountability," says [Rep. Matt Dean](#) (R-Dellwood), who sponsors two separate bills supporting the governor's plan.

But pay-for-performance initiatives have largely met with a mixed response from legislators. When a similar bill (HF3187) sponsored by [Rep. Joyce Peppin](#) (R-Rogers) came before a House committee on March 21, [Rep. Michael Beard](#) (R-Shakopee) said bluntly that such bills "annoy the living daylights out of me."

"I wonder, in this whole mix, if we're not shooting ourselves right in the foot — and even by having this discussion, if we're not impugning the integrity of this place," Beard said.

[Rep. Tina Liebling](#) (DFL-Rochester) agreed, saying pay-for-performance sent the wrong message to the public.

"I think this sends the message, very much like the governor's performance-pay bill, that people who come here work for the money." She added that most legislators could make a lot more money working in the private sector.

Surprisingly, however, one of the more dramatic proposals seems to have met with a

positive response — at least in the House.

[HF2890](#), sponsored by [Rep. Barb Sykora](#) (R-Excelsior), would extend House members' terms of office from two years to four years and stagger elections for both House and Senate members.

During a March 21 hearing before the [House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee](#), Sykora said her bill would allow the House to retain experienced people "who can continue to focus on policy rather than think about another election," while still providing members of each legislative district with "an opportunity to throw someone out" every two years.

Although some committee members expressed reservations, suggesting that the state has followed the national model for a reason, others said four-year terms for representatives is an idea whose time has come.

"It's probably time to do this," said [Rep. Randy Demmer](#) (R-Hayfield). "I think the nature of things have changed over the last six to 10 years ... and quite frankly, I get concerned sometimes that the House in particular doesn't have long-term thinking in its mind as we look at a campaign every other year."

The committee approved the bill, which now goes to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#). But even if it gets passed on the House floor, the bill might not ultimately go anywhere. Perhaps tellingly, it has no Senate companion. 🐼

## SILENT OBSERVANCE



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Members of the House Education Finance Committee Rep. Mark Buesgens and Rep. Mindy Greiling observe a moment of silence and reflection at 2 p.m. March 21 to honor the victims of the shootings in Red Lake one year earlier. Gov. Tim Pawlenty asked that across the state, and particularly in schools, a moment of silence be observed at that time to show support and love for our fellow Minnesotans at Red Lake.



## ★ AGRICULTURE

### Poisonous plant awareness

When Robert Marg of rural Altura trimmed his Japanese yew tree and threw the branches onto a pile in his pasture, he had no idea he would be rewarded for his landscaping efforts with two dead dairy cows.

He later learned his cows probably ingested only a small bit of the yew tree and that an 8-inch piece is enough to kill a full-grown cow.

Marg told members of the [House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee](#) March 22 that, although there was nothing on the label when he originally purchased the tree, he now knows “the stuff is poisonous to about anything that will eat it, including people.”

All his immediate neighbors also had Japanese yew trees growing on their farms and none of them knew they were poisonous, although one neighbor has since attributed the death of one of his cows several years ago to eating from a yew that grew near the pasture fence.

Marg’s story was in support of [HF3066](#), sponsored by [Rep. Gene Pelowski, Jr.](#) (DFL-Winona). The bill would require Minnesota’s agriculture commissioner to consult with nursery stock growers, dealers, retailers and other interested parties to compile a list of appropriate procedures and display materials for increasing public awareness at the point-of-retail sale of nursery stock that poses toxic hazards to livestock, pets and people.

“I’m not requesting that these plants are totally banned or anything like that, I just would like that the public be made more aware of the poisonous plants. My loss was two cows which were valued at over \$3,000,” Marg said.

Tim Power, president of the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, said it would be difficult to add more words to plant labels since they are “already extremely verbose” and that the legislation would result in an economic disadvantage to Minnesota’s nursery businesses.

Approved by the committee, the bill now goes to the House floor.

A companion bill ([SF3345](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Steve Murphy](#) (DFL-Red Wing), awaits action in the [Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee](#).

## ★ BANKING

### New banking facility

The House approved a bill March 20 that would permit a new bank to open in Shamrock

Township.

Approved 131-0, HF2709, sponsored by [Rep. Loren Solberg](#) (DFL-Grand Rapids), awaits action by the full Senate. [Sen. Tom Saxhaug](#) (DFL-Grand Rapids) is the Senate sponsor.

The bill authorizes the State Bank of McGregor, located in McGregor, to operate a separate facility in Shamrock Township, with approval of the commerce commissioner.

A bank that wants to open a new branch in a township needs permission from the Legislature. This would be the second exemption in two years.

During a March 14 House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee hearing, Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) asked if other banks approved of the new facility. Jonathan Passer, a loan officer at the bank, said there is a credit union in town but that the next closest bank to McGregor is 24 miles away.

The Shamrock Town Board supports the bill.

## ★ BONDING

### Bonding recommendations

The [House Higher Education Finance Committee](#) recommended \$486.5 million in capital budget requests for the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system March 20.

Committee Chair [Rep. Bud Nornes](#) (R-Fergus Falls) said the committee did not exclude any projects, but rather ranked them based on the priority lists submitted by the university and MnSCU.

Priorities topping the university’s list include:

- \$80 million for asset preservation including maintaining health and safety in buildings, hazardous material abatement, access improvements and air quality improvement;
- \$26.6 million for a Carlson School of Management expansion on the Minneapolis campus; and
- \$15.3 million for construction of a business and economics building on the Duluth campus.

MnSCU’s top three requests are: \$110 million for asset preservation, \$32.9 million for a science center addition and renovation at Minnesota State University, Mankato; and \$14 million for St. Cloud State University’s Wick Science Building addition and renovation.

The governor is recommending

\$20 million for MnSCU asset preservation. “The committee felt that was way too low,” Nornes told the [House Capital Investment Committee](#) March 21. “At a minimum it should be equal to the university.” The governor is recommending \$40 million for university asset preservation.

Also in the recommendations are \$15.5 million in projects that did not make the systems’ priority lists, including a multipurpose facility at Southwest Minnesota State University, a university pilot biomass energy project and a research and outreach center in Morris that would, in part, use wind energy to develop fertilizer.

[Rep. Ron Latz](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park), who unsuccessfully tried to have them removed from the recommendations, said the majority of the additional projects were an attempt to run around the educational institutions’ “established processes for system priorities.” Adding them will encourage systems to continue to add projects at the last minute, he said.

“Some of them were late in the process as far as getting on the list, or because of the local private funds that are involved in at least two or three of those projects,” and should be taken into consideration, Nornes said.

## ★ BUDGET

### Supplemental spending

Finance Commissioner Peggy Ingison presented what appears to be good news to the [House Ways and Means Committee](#) March 20.

The [supplemental budget](#) proposed by [Gov. Tim Pawlenty](#) calls for spending an addition \$246 million from the general fund and \$170 million from other sources, and the state is making headway toward regaining its AAA bond rating.

In a letter to legislative leaders, Ingison wrote, “FY 2006-07 recommended changes include \$49 million in tax reductions, an \$8 million increase in non-tax revenues, \$102 million in ‘budget fixes,’ and \$103 million in other general fund spending for the biennium. These recommendations provide for limited new spending for emergency items, critical initiatives, and the cost of the Governor’s 2006 capital budget.”

But some members of the committee weren’t entirely pleased.

[Rep. Philip Krinkie](#) (R-Lino Lakes), for example.

“Ms. Ingison, can you give some idea of what the governor’s thinking is with regard to the Supreme Court case which is going to be heard in about three weeks — what the governor is planning on doing if that case is lost and there’s a \$370 million shortfall?” he asked, referring to the litigation involving the health impact fee enacted by the Legislature last year.

Ingison said she believes the amount of money that has been put into the reserves is part of the governor’s plan to prepare for that possibility, and that if the Legislature was still in session and a negative decision was handed down, he might rethink some of his spending recommendations.

Krinkie is concerned about having to “scramble” to balance the budget at the end of the session.

However, [Rep. Tom Rukavina](#) (DFL-Virginia) offered that the fee litigation could end immediately if a bill were introduced that “says it’s a tax and not a fee,” and Krinkie agreed.

After learning that the governor is recommending additional non-general fund spending including \$58 million from the Health Care Access Fund to finance infrastructure preparations for a possible Avian flu epidemic, a mental health initiative, the University of Minnesota/Mayo Clinic bioscience partnership and health information technology, [Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) pointed out that the Health Care Access Fund was intended to be spent on providing health insurance to people who don’t get health insurance where they work.

## ★ CHILDREN

### Obtaining a ‘clean’ birth certificate

For parents of deceased children, a piece of paper can be more than just any old article to throw away. It can represent a life that once existed.

[HF3171](#), sponsored by [Rep. Karen Klinzing](#) (R-Woodbury), would allow parents of deceased children to obtain one clean copy of their child’s birth certificate, without the “deceased” label and date of death, up to six years after the child was born. Only one clean copy could be obtained and would be electronically-tracked by the [Department of Health](#).

The [House Health Policy and Finance Committee](#) approved the bill March 22 and referred it to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#). A companion bill ([SF3092](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Betsy Wergin](#) (R-Princeton), awaits action by the [Senate](#)

[Health and Family Security Committee](#).

Klinzing said this bill offers a reprieve for parents who often don’t have time to deal with obtaining a birth certificate or think about it when their child is sick.

That was the case for Jennifer Strack.

Strack’s daughter died 40 days after being born — she had a congenital heart defect and went through two unsuccessful open heart surgeries. When Strack called the county about what to do about the birth certificate containing the word “deceased,” she was told to simply “white out the words” and that she should’ve gotten the birth certificate before her daughter died. “A life, no matter how short, is still a life,” said Strack, who eventually got a clean copy through a personal connection. “Isn’t it enough that their child is gone forever?”

## CONSUMERS



### Banning the ultimate party machine

[Rep. Morrie Lanning](#) (R-Moorhead) is concerned that if a device billed as the ultimate party machine becomes more prevalent, it could lead to greater incidents of binge drinking, which he says is now an epidemic.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK  
**Rep. Morrie Lanning demonstrates a device known as AWOL, or alcohol without liquid, that mixes alcohol with oxygen to create a vapor that can be inhaled.**

The sponsor of [HF3336](#), he told the [House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee](#) March 22 the bill would make it illegal to use, possess, purchase or sell a device known as AWOL, or alcohol without liquid.

“My community has experienced two deaths as a result of binge drinking... I think the feeling is that if this device becomes readily available, and if it becomes widely used, that we are going to greatly increase the amount of binge drinking that takes place in our communities and our country.”

The machine mixes alcohol with oxygen creating a vapor that can be inhaled “creating a faster and more intense high,” said Marlene Kjelsberg, office supervisor for the Department of Public Safety [Division of Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement](#). “Inhalation may be more likely to cause alcohol toxicity than binge drinking because the user does not have time to feel the effects.”

According to the manufacturer’s Web site, when a machine is used, “Alcohol enters the bloodstream through the lungs rather than the stomach making AWOL low calorie and low carbohydrate. The resulting feeling is the same sense of well being an adult gets from consuming alcohol in the traditional manner, only milder.”

Lanning said that 12 states have banned the sale of the device and 18 others are considering similar legislation.

With the machine available over the Internet, [Rep. Mary Murphy](#) (DFL-Hermantown) asked how the state would go about regulating the possession of the machine.

Kjelsberg said the individual person, not the licensee, would be subject to the penalty, and the investigation would be conducted like any ordinary criminal proceeding.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the committee’s omnibus bill.

A companion bill ([SF3256](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Jane Ranum](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the [Senate Commerce Committee](#).

### Privacy in vehicles

It turns out privacy is an issue on and off the road.

[HF3447](#), sponsored by [Rep. Joyce Peppin](#) (R-Rogers), would provide privacy protection for motor vehicle event recorders.

Under the bill, manufacturers must disclose if a recorder is installed and insurance companies would not be able to access the data without owner approval.

Often located in the airbag compartment of vehicles, the recorders provide data collected just prior to crashes. It’s then used to assist safety researchers and engineers to improve vehicle performance.

The [House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee](#) approved the bill March 22 and referred it to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#). It has no Senate companion.

[Rep. Diane Loeffler](#) (DFL-Mpls) wanted to know if insurance companies might require recorders in their customers' vehicles and how that would be used.

Peppin said about two-thirds of all cars contain recorders. "This should be private data," she said, adding that the bill prevents insurance companies from obtaining recorders and then regulating their use. She also reiterated that the recorders aren't the same as black boxes on airplanes and only record data during crashes.

### Protections for seniors

Minnesota could be undertaking greater steps to protect senior citizens from financial exploitation.

[HF2856](#), sponsored by [Rep. Tim Wilkin](#) (R-Eagan), would enforce a variety of measures against such exploitation.

For example, the bill enables seniors to report possible financial scams by calling a toll-free helpline established by the commissioner of commerce. It would also allow banks, credit unions and other financial institutions to "initiate, communicate with, and disclose customer records" to law enforcement agencies in suspected financial exploitations against customers who are senior citizens. That information would remain confidential once handed over to law enforcement, Wilkin said.

On March 22, the [House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee](#) approved the bill and referred it to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#). A companion bill ([SF3115](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Thomas Neuville](#) (R-Northfield), awaits action by the [Senate Commerce Committee](#).

Because citizens tend to contact the attorney general's office with consumer protection issues, [Rep. Diane Loeffler](#) (DFL-Mpls) asked if Wilkin would consider working with the attorney general's consumer protection division. Wilkin said the [Department of Commerce](#) already deals with a variety of consumer-related issues and that it handles financial cases that his bill addresses.

[Rep. Tina Liebling](#) (DFL-Rochester) wanted clarification on whether the toll-free helpline was just for seniors.

People working the helpline would likely accept and answer most calls, said Wilkin.

[Rep. Paul Gazelka](#) (R-Brainerd) said he thought the bill was a good idea but questioned the cost. Wilkin said that funding amounts hadn't been determined, but that a fiscal note

would be available by the time the bill reaches the [House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee](#).

## CRIME



### Child pornography sentences

Minimum sentences would be established for people disseminating, possessing or manufacturing child pornography, under a bill held over for consideration by the [House](#)



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

**Tim O'Malley, assistant superintendent with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, testifies, March 16 before the House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee in support of a bill that would establish minimum penalties disseminating, possessing or manufacturing child pornography.**

[Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee](#) for omnibus bill.

Currently, there is no minimum sentence for child pornography offenses. As with other offenses, the Legislature lets judges, in the context of sentencing guidelines, decide how to sentence an offender up to a statutory maximum penalty.

Under [HF2829](#), sponsored by [Rep. Jeff Johnson](#) (R-Plymouth), someone in a position of authority over a child, such as a coach or teacher, and who uses the organization's resources to disseminate or possess child pornography, would receive a minimum three-year sentence. Such a person would get a minimum of five years behind bars for disseminating child pornography.

For anyone not in a position of authority, possession or dissemination of child pornography would bring a mandatory minimum sentence of six months for first-time offenders. Subsequent offenses, or predatory offenders, would receive a minimum of 12 months.

"This part of the bill arose based on a case in Moorhead, where an elementary school social worker was found to have 26 child pornography images on his computer, and disseminating at least one of them," Johnson told the committee March 16. "He was convicted of a felony charge, but got no jail time. It was all a stayed sentence. If he doesn't get in trouble in the next three years he's going to end up with a misdemeanor on his record."

Tim O'Malley, assistant superintendent of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, said that according to the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, 763 child pornography distribution cases were reported nationwide in 2003; a year later there were 9,700 cases.

A companion bill ([SF2699](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Leo Foley](#) (DFL-Coon Rapids), awaits action by the [Senate Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee](#).

### Regulating marriage brokers

[Rep. Kathy Tingelstad](#) (R-Andover) is concerned that some brokers of arranged international marriages may be actually bringing women here for prostitution; and that others are ending up as domestic abuse victims.

A bill she sponsors, [HF2858](#), would regulate international marriage brokers by requiring them to supply certain information to the women they are bringing to the state.

While there are reputable international marriage brokers, there are others that are acting outside of the law, Ilean Her, executive



director of the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans told the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) March 20. Many of the domestic abuse cases that organization deals with involve women who have been brought to the United States as mail-order brides, she said. "Sometimes these women are also violated sexually in that they are prostituted out because the husbands have total control over these women."

Under the bill, before a client could receive a visa application for a foreign fiancé or fiancée, the marriage broker would need to have the client's criminal and marital history. That information would be provided to the recruit in their native language.

[Rep. Chris DeLaForest](#) (R-Andover) said it sounds like the brokers are acting as "international pimps," and suggested that instead of regulating the industry, it should be outlawed.

"I don't see ordering a bride like you would order a lawnmower over the Internet is really conducive to what we would all consider to be a marriage. Why not just outlaw the darn thing instead of throwing so many regulations on it?"

The bill was approved and sent to the [House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee](#). A companion bill ([SF2575](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), awaits action by the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#).

### Meth education

A bill aiming to reduce a statewide problem would educate methamphetamine offenders on the dangers of the drug.

[HF2147](#), sponsored by [Rep. Judy Soderstrom](#) (R-Mora), would require the health commissioner to develop methamphetamine education materials. It would also require sheriffs to provide such information to meth offenders in county jails. The education materials would be offered at least once a week through videos and handouts to those serving time for manufacturing, selling or possessing meth.

The [House Health Policy and Finance Committee](#) approved the bill March 22 and referred it to the [House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee](#). A companion bill ([SF2127](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Becky Lourey](#) (DFL-Kerrick), awaits action by the [Senate Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee](#).

Three young testifiers said they never received any meth education from sheriffs, and Paul Anderson said the time he spent incarcerated only taught him how to better feed his meth addiction. All three agreed that some form of education could have made a difference in their lives.

Methamphetamine erodes brain cells, damages the nervous system and causes dental damage that can result in lost teeth.

Steve Borchardt, the Minnesota Sheriff's Association legislative committee chair, said that although the bill's sentiments are good, there were unfunded mandates that not all smaller county jails would have the time or resources to meet. [Rep. Fran Bradley](#) (R-Rochester) had similar feelings and said the bill's "language is quite prescriptive."

But [Rep. Barb Goodwin](#) (DFL-Columbia Heights) said education is an important step in controlling the widespread meth problem in Minnesota,

[Rep. Char Samuelson](#) (R-New Brighton) agreed. "Anything we can do to get information into people's hands, the better. And it's certainly a lot better than doing nothing."

### Victim notification

Victims of criminal sexual misconduct may be given notification if charges are not filed against a defendant.

[HF3415](#), sponsored by [Rep. Doug Meslow](#) (R-White Bear Lake), was approved March 21 by the [House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee](#) and referred to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#). A companion bill ([SF3102](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Thomas Neuville](#) (R-Northfield), awaits action by the [Senate Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee](#).

"This simply broadens the umbrella of a very sensible law that is out there right now," Meslow said.

A prosecutor must now make every reasonable effort to notify a victim if the prosecutor opts to decline prosecution or if the charges are dismissed in domestic abuse cases, he said. This bill expands that to criminal sexual assault cases.

"We don't want to have victims waiting around, wondering why a case hasn't been called, wondering if the case has been resolved, wondering why they haven't heard anything about the case," he said. "That victim, if the case is not prosecuted, may choose to take some actions on her own or his own." For example, a domestic assault victim may seek an Order for Protection or take action in family court.

"We have experience talking and working with victims who have been left not knowing what was happening in their case. This just allows prosecutors to take that step to alleviate that burden on the victim, to let them know that they decided to decline prosecution, why they declined, and that the prosecutor informs them of their option for a restraining order, which could be very helpful to the victim at

that time," said Paula Weber, director of the [Office of Justice Programs Division](#) in the [Department of Public Safety](#).

## DEVELOPMENT



### Vikings stadium proposed

Officials from Anoka County and the Minnesota Vikings made their latest pitch for a new football stadium and entertainment complex in Blaine.

[HF2294](#), sponsored by [Rep. Andy Westerberg](#) (R-Blaine), would create an Anoka County-Blaine Stadium Authority to construct and operate the development, which would include the stadium, a corporate office complex, hotel and conference center, medical facility, "Northern Lights" retail center and a preserved wetland area with pedestrian trails.

The [House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee](#) held an informational hearing on the bill March 17, but took no action. A companion bill ([SF2061](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Don Betzold](#) (DFL-Fridley), awaits action in the [Senate State and Local Government Operations Committee](#).

The proposal asks the state to issue \$115 million in bonds to help build the stadium, and also requests that it speed up



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

**Lester Bagley, Minnesota Vikings vice president of public affairs/stadium development, explains the "Northern Lights" development project in Blaine, which would include a new stadium for the Vikings, during a March 17 informational hearing by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee.**



already-planned improvements to roads and highways in the area, which could also be paid for with project-generated revenues.

Anoka County Governmental Services Division Manager Steve Novak said that voting on the bill would be difficult and controversial, but it would be the right decision in the long run.

“Stadiums are never fun to vote on. Big projects are never fun to vote on. But it turns out, if you look to history, they end up being pretty important to our economy,” Novak said.

David Murphy, a partner with Kansas City-based Crawford Architects, testified that the project would create 4,000 temporary construction jobs; 9,000 permanent, full-time jobs after construction; and approximately \$14 million per year in sales tax revenue for the state.

[Rep. Denny McNamara](#) (R-Hastings) raised concerns that Vikings owner Zygi Wilf and local officials planned to use eminent domain to acquire some of the properties currently occupying the proposed development site.

“You’re keeping the threat open to take private property to give from one private property owner to another, and you have made it public that the city and the county have kept that option open,” McNamara told Novak. “I’ll tell you, I don’t agree with that.”

Novak said that neither the county, nor the city plan to use eminent domain, but he acknowledged the option exists.

Vikings fan Larry Spooner of Plymouth implored the committee to approve the stadium proposal.

“As Vikings fans,” Spooner said, “We’re really excited about the project that’s in front of us. We really feel that this is a solution to a major problem that we’ve had in this state for years.”

## ★ EDUCATION

### **Splitting school districts**

As Minnesota’s rural population decreased in the late-1970s and early-1980s, the Legislature consolidated school districts. Now, as the Twin Cities metropolitan area expands and growth pressure is on outlying districts, some legislators are saying it is time to divide large districts into smaller ones.

[HF3237](#), sponsored by [Rep. Joyce Peppin](#) (R-Rogers), deals specifically with the Elk River School District. It proposes that voters be asked at the November general election if the school district should be split into two.

After initially being defeated 15-11 by the House Education Policy and Reform Committee March 21, [Rep. Jim Abeler](#)

(R-Anoka) successfully made a motion to have it reconsidered to see if members wanted to further discuss potential district splits. The bill was then tabled.

Peppin said a growing body of evidence shows there are “significant advantages” to smaller districts, between 5,000 and 10,000 students. The Elk River district is the 10th largest in the state with 11,000 students and is expected to nearly double in the next 10 years.

Even though the metropolitan area has seen tremendous growth, Peppin said, no district has ever been split, and district configuration has not changed in 40 years.

“We’re going to have this issue in lots of different areas. I think this is a good time to look at it. I think this is a good district to do it with,” she said.

Questions were raised about possibly creating a disparity pitting the more property-rich part of a district against the property-poor.

“My fear is that through these elections, the wealthier, faster growing part of the community could vote the other part of the district off the island,” said [Rep. Paul Marquart](#) (DFL-Dilworth).

He called this a local fight that is being brought to the state level.

Although the bill only deals with Elk River, members were concerned it won’t be the first.

“Is this going to foster a whole bunch of other districts coming with their own separate requests to form different school districts?” said [Rep. Lynn Wardlow](#) (R-Eagan).

A companion bill ([SF2894](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Warren Limmer](#) (R-Maple Grove), awaits action in the [Senate Education Committee](#).

### **Teacher suspensions**

A teacher charged with a felony could be suspended without pay in all Minnesota school districts, under a bill approved March 16 by the House Education Policy and Reform Committee.

Currently, only school districts in Minneapolis, Duluth and St. Paul are allowed to suspend a teacher without pay. Other districts are authorized to immediately discharge a teacher convicted of a felony after concluding a disciplinary hearing. However, in recent years, people in these districts have become incensed that teachers who have been charged with child pornography and other felonies enjoy full-pay while they wait months for a disciplinary hearing.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tom Emmer](#) (R-Delano), [HF3178](#), as of press time, was scheduled to be heard March 23 in the House Civil Law

and Elections Committee. It has no Senate companion.

“It’s amazing that we’re inconsistent on this issue,” said [Rep. Karen Klinzing](#) (R-Woodbury). “But the whole concept that we can suspend pay and issue a consequence simply because someone is charged with a crime is very scary to me, because we’ve seen many a person charged in the news lately and their name has been completely raked through the mud only for them to be found innocent a year or so later, and we never heard about their innocence. ... I wish we would level the playing field by going the other way, and not be able to assume the guilt first.”

The bill would require the district to refund the pay of a teacher who is not penalized, suspended or discharged, after the disciplinary hearing is concluded.

“If the school board is following the law there should be no claim for damages,” Emmer said.

## ★ ELECTIONS

### **Pandemic effects on elections**

The probability of a pandemic and its effect on the election process is the rationale behind [HF3569](#), sponsored by [Rep. Jean Wagenius](#) (DFL-Mpls).

“This is probably the first bill that asks us to deal with the practical problems of dealing with a pandemic,” she told the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) March 22.

The bill expands the conditions under which a person could vote absentee to include a quarantine order from the governor that asks people to avoid public places because of bioterrorism or a threat to public health.

[Rep. Chris DeLaForest](#) (R-Andover) questioned if this would apply to everyone in a precinct, even those precincts that are large and rural. “I understand the intent, but I think the language at least raises questions about what are we creating here in terms of obligations and coordination.”

Wagenius countered, “I did not try to meet every contingency out there. ... I do hope this begins the conversation that I hear starting right now.” She said these preparations are important and should be done in a bipartisan way.

The bill was approved by the committee and now awaits action on the House floor.

A companion bill ([SF2737](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Jane Ranum](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the [Senate Elections Committee](#).

## No campaigning at schools

School districts could be required to adopt and implement a policy that prohibits school employees from using district funds and resources to pass, elect or defeat a political candidate or other ballot question, such as a referendum, under [HF1948](#).

"The principle is that school time and resources should not be used for lobbying purposes and it doesn't belong in our school environment," [Rep. Mary Liz Holberg](#) (R-Lakeville), the sponsor of [HF1948](#), told the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) March 20. The resources would include employee time, materials, equipment and facility technology.

Approved by the committee, it now goes to the House floor. It has no Senate companion.

Charlie Kyte, executive director of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, said the bill is on the right track. However, he said that when a school district is asking for a referendum on a bond issue or for a levy to raise money for programming, it is part of a superintendent's job to make the case to the community. "We are nervous about a statute that directs policy to take the ability away from the people charged by the board to make that case for education."

The policy would not apply when an employee disseminates factual information about a political question as required by their job responsibilities.

The Lakeville School District, in Holberg's district, developed such a policy in 1997 after volatile campaigns caused a negative atmosphere in the schools and disengaged the voters.

## Contribution limits for judges

A bill placing limits on how much money a district court judicial candidate could receive from an individual or political committee was tabled by the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) March 22.

Sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park), [HF3569](#) would place the same contribution limits on judicial candidates as are currently in place for House and Senate candidates.

"There is a giant loophole in our campaign finance laws," Simon said. "There is currently no contribution limit for judge races, meaning that anyone who had \$1 million could give it to a judge candidate."

He said this bill is important because, this year, judges will be able to seek and accept partisan endorsements, campaign contributions and they will be able to announce

their positions on certain legal issues.

Simon had brought someone to testify for the bill, but [Rep. Jeff Johnson](#) (R-Plymouth), the committee chair, said he had told some who did not like the bill that he would not be taking any testimony, and that "I would just lay it over. So that puts me in a bad position. So, if we could avoid that, I would appreciate it."

Acknowledging the process, Simon said that the contribution limits may be problematic for some and he is willing to discuss any changes necessary.

A companion bill ([SF3351](#)), sponsored by [Sen. John Hottinger](#) (DFL-St. Peter), awaits action by the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#).

## Moving primary to August

There are about eight weeks between the state primary and the November general election. That short turnaround time, election officials say, makes the logistics of some ballot preparation and counting difficult. But would voter turnout be even less than it already is if the state primary election is moved to August?

That was the question before the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) March 20 as members discussed [HF2862](#). The bill was approved and now awaits action by the full House.

Sponsored by [Rep. Laura Brod](#) (R-New Prague), the bill would move the [state primary](#) date to the second Tuesday in August rather than the current first Tuesday after the second Monday in September, beginning with the 2008 primary.

Jim Hansen, intergovernmental relations director for the Secretary of State's office, said there is only a 30-day turnaround for absentee ballots coming from military voters making it difficult to ensure that all primary votes are counted. He added that a change would also make it easier for election officials to prepare ballots for the general election resulting from the primary. "There is a very short, tight window," he said.

[Rep. Pete Nelson](#) (R-Lindstrom) is concerned that an August primary would result in even fewer people going to the polls. He said that people are still on vacation in August, and they do not get back into their normal routines until after school starts.

[Rep. Bill Hilty](#) (DFL-Finlayson) said that new ballot tabulating machines will be in place throughout the state as part of the Help America Vote Act. They will need programming adjustments for each election, and election officials have told him they are concerned with the amount of time it will take to accomplish the task. "The additional time is something that election officials would greatly appreciate."

A companion bill ([SF3364](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Linda Higgins](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the [Senate Elections Committee](#).

## Staggered terms

A bill calling for staggered state senators' terms was passed by the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) March 20.

It now goes to the full House.

The change sought in [HF333](#), sponsored by [Rep. Laura Brod](#) (R-New Prague), would require an amendment to the constitution, and her bill asks that the question be placed on the 2006 general election ballot.

Under current law, House members are elected every two years, and senators are elected to four-year terms in years ending with 2 and 6, such as 2002 and 2006, and two-year terms in years ending in 0, such as 2000.

Under the bill, following the next redistricting in 2012, senators elected from odd-numbered districts would serve terms of two years, four years and four years each decade. Senators elected from even-numbered districts would serve a pattern of four years, four years and two years. This would result in one-half of the Senate up for election every two years and all senators on the ballot in the election following redistricting.

A companion bill ([SF425](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Geoff Michel](#) (R-Edina), awaits action by the [Senate Elections Committee](#).

## ★ EMPLOYMENT

### Which wage will prevail?

Take your pick: mean, median or mode.

Minnesota uses a modal calculation when it comes to establishing wages, but that could change.

[HF3593](#), sponsored by [Rep. Bob Gunther](#) (R-Fairmont), would change Minnesota's practice of using modal calculation — or the wage being paid to the largest number of workers — to determine prevailing wage rates to that of median calculation for "workers in the same field within the same area." Determining the median, or average, would also be based on wage statistics published in the Occupational Employment Statistics survey by the [Department of Employment and Economic Development](#) instead of the [Department of Labor and Industry](#).

After discussing the bill March 22, the [House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee](#) held it over for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill. There is no Senate companion.

Lynn Reed, Minnesota Taxpayers

Association executive director, presented his organization's study on prevailing wage rates in Minnesota. He said the state's current modal calculation — California is the only other state using the same method — means there are less funds available for other state programs because wages are higher than necessary.

But [Rep. Nora Slawik](#) (DFL-Maplewood) questioned why the study didn't reference actual statistics. Reed said the organization was making an educated guess and wanted the study to jumpstart more talks between those supporting and opposing the bill.

Nancy Jones, vice president of Bloomington-based Les Jones Roofing, supports the bill despite the lack of raw numbers. Besides providing insurance and benefits to her employees, they have to be paid high wages, Jones said.

However, Dick Anfang, Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council president, said high wages attract much needed workers to the construction field as more baby boomers retire in the coming years. "This bill is a wolf in sheep's clothing," Anfang said.

## ★ GOVERNMENT

### Green light for Capitol renovation

The State Capitol and Ford Building could undergo much-needed renovations, if a bill approved by a House committee March 21 becomes law.

[HF3600](#), sponsored by [Rep. Diane Loeffler](#) (DFL-Mpls), allocates more than \$16.5 million in bond proceeds — \$3.18 million to restore the east wing and dome of the State Capitol and \$13.4 million to renovate the now-dormant Ford Building.

The [House State Government Finance Committee](#) approved it as a stand-alone bill and referred it to the [House Capital Investment Committee](#). A companion, [SF3377](#), sponsored by [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), awaits action in the [Senate Finance Committee](#).

Loeffler said making the Capitol renovation simultaneous with the Ford Building renovation allows the state to save general fund dollars. During the renovation of the Capitol's east wing, she said, Senate members and staff could be housed in the nearby Ford Building, making for a smooth transition.

According to Loeffler, the renovation plans call for a "phased approach." The first phase would include the design work for the east wing as well as the dome renovation; the second phase would include the actual renovation of the east wing interior.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

**Nancy Stark, executive secretary of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, answers a question about the restoration proposal for the State Capitol during the March 21 House State Government Finance Committee meeting.**

Funding the east wing renovation will require a separate bonding request from the Legislature in 2007.

Loeffler said plans for the Ford Building might include moveable walls, at least during the transitional phase, to make the building a more flexible space to accommodate the needs of the Senate.

She hopes the project will be completed in time for the 2008 state sesquicentennial celebration.

### Disposing of private data

Government entities should do a better job of keeping the private data they have collected from falling into the wrong hands. [HF1888](#), sponsored by [House Minority Leader Matt Entenza](#) (DFL-St. Paul), would require government to do a better job of managing and purging its data.

He cited an example of driver's license data being hauled off by a recycler to a field in Wisconsin and left to blow around, available to anyone.

According to the bill, when confidential

or private data is being disposed of, it should be destroyed in a way that prevents anyone from learning its contents. It also calls for the commissioner of administration to administer a record management program. Local government units would also be asked to cooperate with the commissioner in establishing record management procedures.

A letter to the committee from Shamus O'Meara, chair of the Minnesota Governors' Council on Developmental Disabilities, points out that this legislation, if enacted, could open up job opportunities for those with developmental disabilities "whose skills could be utilized in positions related to the shredding and disposal of documents."

The bill was approved March 22 by the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#) and now moves to the [House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee](#). A companion bill [SF1779](#), sponsored by [Sen. Richard Cohen](#) (DFL-St. Paul), awaits action by the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#).



## ★ HEALTH

### Maple Grove hospital

Signed  
by  
the  
governor  
★ ★ ★

A new hospital is closer to construction in a northwestern Twin Cities metropolitan area suburb.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty signed into law March 22 legislation allowing for a new 300-bed facility to be built in Maple Grove as a partnership between North Memorial Health Care and Fairview Health Services.

The law, 18 months in the making, grants an exception to a moratorium that has been in place since 1984 on hospital construction or modification. Eighteen exceptions have previously been granted.

Separate bills were passed last year by the House and Senate, but a conference committee called to work out the details such as the number of beds and the services that will be provided, which will include surgical, orthopedic, pediatric and mental health services, did not meet. New conferees were appointed this year to complete the work.

The facility will be built near the intersection of Interstate 94 and the future Highway 610. It is expected to be completed by Dec. 31, 2009.

[Rep. Kurt Zellers](#) (R-Maple Grove) and [Sen. Warren Limmer](#) (R-Maple Grove) are the sponsors.

[HF1915\\*/SF1840/CH172](#)

### Lifting layaway status

Nursing home beds once tucked away under a state statute could again be used for senior care facilities.

[Rep. Jim Abeler](#) (R-Anoka) is sponsoring [HF1203](#), which would allow beds placed on layaway status to be used in approved projects. On March 16, the [House Health Policy and Finance Committee](#) held the bill over for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill. A companion bill ([SF1079](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Leo Foley](#) (DFL-Coon Rapids), awaits action by the [Senate Finance Committee](#).

According to [state statute](#), a moratorium on the number of permissible nursing home beds is in place “to control nursing home expenditure growth and enable the state to meet the needs of its elderly by providing high quality services in the most appropriate manner along a continuum of care.”

The bill allows Crest View Lutheran Home to add up to 60 beds in a nursing facility in Ramsey. After the beds are relicensed and recertified, a new nursing facility located on a long-term care campus that provides a variety

of services for senior citizens will house the beds.

Mark Pederson, a Guardian Angels Care Center administrator, said there are already 465 beds in facilities along the Highway 10 corridor. He said adding more beds would be a financial hardship for current providers in the area. The number of beds that would be added is unknown because, he said, the number keeps changing. “The Department of Human Services did issue a report back in 2003...that Minnesota will have an adequate supply of beds to meet the demand until at least 2015,” said Pederson. “This is 2006. Do we need more beds today?”

Abeler said that more beds could be used to serve a new population. He also clarified for [Rep. Barb Goodwin](#) (DFL-Columbia Heights) that the department would still have to approve the additional beds.

### Therapy time

Physical therapists may see more of their patients if a bill permitting self-directed care passes this session.

[HF854](#), sponsored by [Rep. Brad Finstad](#) (R-New Ulm), would eliminate physical therapy time limit prohibitions. The Licensing Subcommittee of the [House Health Policy and Finance Committee](#) approved the bill on March 20 and referred it to the full committee. A companion bill ([SF637](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Yvonne Prettner Solon](#) (DFL-Duluth), awaits action by the [Senate Health and Family Security Committee](#).

Currently, patients seeking care from a physical therapist beyond 30 days need a physician’s permission. Alan Schultz, a marathon runner, said his recovery from an injury was slowed down because of current law. Dr. William Roberts, a physician at the University of Minnesota, said the bill would not only help those like Schultz but would also be cost-efficient and effective, too.

David Thorson, a Minnesota Medical Association member, however, said physical therapists are well-trained but they aren’t allowed by law to make a diagnosis. Thorson had a patient, who was a soccer player, complaining about thigh pain and requested referral to a physical therapist. But tests showed a calcified mass in the patient’s thigh that was then taken out. “I feel we need to continue to have some control over access to physical therapy,” Thorson said.

Another opponent, Marty Caron, said that despite his reservations he would welcome collaborating with physical therapists on the issue. Thorson agreed.

Still, [Rep. Tom Emmer](#) (R-Delano) said physical therapists are highly skilled and

trained. He pointed out that studies have not shown a negative impact to self-directed care. “We’ve got to trust people to self-direct their care,” said Emmer. “I haven’t seen a problem so far.”

## ★ HIGHER EDUCATION

### Postsecondary course policy changes

Response to a new policy by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system regarding postsecondary courses offered in high schools is the subject of a bill approved by the [House Higher Education Finance Committee](#) March 22.

Under [HF3252](#), sponsored by [Rep. Marty Seifert](#) (R-Marshall), “an eligible postsecondary system or institution must not adopt policies that would have the effect of limiting the statewide delivery of courses offered at secondary schools.”

The bill now goes to the [House Education Policy and Reform Committee](#).

Seifert said that MnSCU recently changed their policy to require high school teachers who are teaching the college courses to have at least a master’s degree in the subject area.

“The policy change is going to significantly limit the supply of teachers in our high schools that are going to be able to teach these courses,” said Charlie Kyte, executive director of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators.

This is going to have a negative effect on the acceleration of academic learning, especially in rural Minnesota, he added.

The bill “casts a net far too broadly,” said Joanne Roach, representing Minnesota State College Faculty. It removes the ability for higher education institutions to determine the credentialing of the faculty doing its work, she said.

A companion bill ([SF2935](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Gary Kubly](#) (DFL-Granite Falls), awaits action by the [Senate Education Committee](#).

## ★ HUMAN SERVICES

### Providing child care

Promoting self-sufficiency, Ramsey County wants to accommodate teen moms who want to graduate high school.

[HF3109](#), sponsored by [Rep. Char Samuelson](#) (R-New Brighton), would establish a teen parents child care pilot project. The [House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee](#) held the bill over March 16 for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

The bill attempts to make it easier for parents



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

**Jenna Hebert holds her 9-month-old son, Miguel, as she listens to testimony in the House Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee March 16 that would establish a child care pilot project for teen parents in Ramsey County.**

to earn high school degrees by streamlining the eligibility process and waiving the co-payment requirement for child care support. It also enables data sharing between the school and county human services.

"We believe this will allow teen parents to place their best energy on being successful in school and successful as parents," said Lorna Pain, St. Paul Public Schools adolescent parent child care coordinator. Moeve Clifford, a student at the AGAPE School, said she started the child care application process two months before her 4-month old daughter was born and she's still not in the program.

[Rep. Nora Slawik](#) (DFL-Maplewood), a supporter of the bill, said the early childhood caucus concluded that students of teen parents who graduate from high school are more likely to stay in school and perform better, too.

Although [Rep. Fran Bradley](#) (R-Rochester) agreed there is a problem for teen parents, he suggested the bureaucratic problem be fixed "at the level where the people have the responsibility to respond to these applications." [Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul) also brought up the question of privacy because of the data sharing clause.

A companion bill ([SF2679](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), awaits action by the [Senate Health and Family Security Committee](#).

## ★ IMMIGRATION

### House passes cooperation bill

The House passed a bill March 20 that would prohibit local authorities from adopting ordinances that prevent their employees from cooperating with federal immigration officials.

[HF2576](#), sponsored by [Rep. Jim Knoblach](#) (R-St. Cloud), was approved 94-37.

Received from the House March 22, the bill was referred to the [Senate State and Local Government Operations Committee](#). [Sen. Betsy Wergin](#) (R-Princeton) is the Senate sponsor.

Aimed at the so-called "sanctuary ordinances" of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the bill states that local governments cannot in any way restrict police officers and other employees from collecting information about a person's immigration status and then sharing that information with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency and other local, state or federal governments.

"It's a bad idea, members, to say we're not going to enforce the law in certain areas," Knoblach said.

[House Minority Leader Matt Entenza](#) (DFL-St. Paul) urged members to vote against the bill, arguing that it took away discretion from local law enforcement.

"The question today is, 'Are we going to support the police or are we going to support the politicians?'"

[Rep. Keith Ellison](#) (DFL-Mpls) successfully amended the bill by adding a provision that prevents current laws against racial profiling from being affected by the new legislation.

"There's no replacement for good police work, and stopping people for what they look like or sound like is not good police work," Ellison said.

## ★ LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### Annexation bill reconsidered

An annexation bill that previously failed to clear a House committee received approval from the same committee after it was modified to apply to only one township.

[HF2867](#), which would require the city of Forest Lake to incorporate a portion of neighboring Columbus Township rather than annex it, received approval from the [House Local Government Committee](#) on March 20.

The committee had originally rejected the bill March 13, after some testifiers warned that it could potentially affect a number of other cities and townships. The bill's sponsor, [Rep. Ray Vandever](#) (R-Forest Lake), amended the

bill to focus its effects exclusively on Forest Lake and Columbus Township.

Forest Lake Mayor Terry Smith testified against the bill, saying that the situation between the two municipalities in question had been misrepresented by Vandever and others. He said Vandever had slighted Forest Lake officials by failing to properly consult with them.

He also refuted the notion that Forest Lake's annexation of Columbus Township is "hostile," noting that a majority of landowners in the disputed area petitioned to join Forest Lake.

"What's hostile is a bill that denies both the landowners and the city the right to due process through a proven and fair administrative hearing," Smith said.

[Rep. Bev Scalze](#) (DFL-Little Canada) said that since Columbus Township had done a good job of planning and was on the way to becoming a city unto itself, not passing the bill would deprive the township of its right to become a city.

A companion bill, ([SF2681](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Debbie Johnson](#) (R-Ham Lake), awaits action by the [Senate State and Local Government Operations Committee](#).

## ★ RECREATION

### No paying to pray

Going to Sunday church services in a state park? If the minister's sermon doesn't go on too long, you might have more money to put into the offering, according to an amendment approved March 22 by the [House Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee](#).

[HF3012](#), a bill that addresses state park permits and fees, now includes a stipulation that motor vehicles be admitted into state parks for free if their occupants are attending a Sunday church service — as long as they depart within two hours.

Moved by [Rep. Al Juhnke](#) (DFL-Willmar) who said "we ought to allow church services in our parks," the amendment was approved despite testimony by John Lilly, a section manager with the Department of Natural Resources.

Lilly said the practice of charging the regular park entrance fee to people attending church services in the park has been in place a long time and that church groups are already not charged for the use of park facilities such as amphitheaters or indoor facilities in inclement weather.

"We do feel that we're reaching out to these groups and accommodating them to a certain extent, but we also feel that it goes on enough,

that not charging is probably — once you take a look at the entire state — a significant chunk of change,” he said.

Sponsored by [Rep. Dennis Ozment](#) (R-Rosemount), the bill was laid over for inclusion in a possible omnibus finance bill.

A companion bill ([SF2872](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Dennis Fredrickson](#) (R-New Ulm), awaits action by the [Senate Finance Committee](#).

## SAFETY

### Ambulance alert

Minnesota’s lemon law could expand to include ambulances if [Rep. Greg Davids](#) (R-Preston) has his way.

[HF3049](#), sponsored by Davids, would regulate the purchase and lease of new ambulances while also establishing a manufacturer’s duty to repair, refund and/or replace the vehicles. Minnesota’s lemon law protects consumers who buy or lease a car, truck or van in Minnesota that is still under the original manufacturer’s warranty.

The [House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee](#) approved the bill March 22 and referred it to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#). A companion bill ([SF2576](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Dan Sparks](#) (DFL-Austin), awaits action by the [Senate Commerce Committee](#).

Davids said when ambulances in the state break down, manufacturers have been slow to fix problems, and sometimes they can’t even fix them. The result: ambulance fleets don’t run at full capacity or tens of thousands of dollars are spent to purchase another vehicle. In rural areas, the issue is even more significant, Davids said.

There was no opposing testimony to the bill, but [Rep. Tom Rukavina](#) (DFL-Virginia) took it as an opportunity to address another fire safety issue. He offered an amendment to promote volunteer firefighters, also known as first responders. One clause of the amendment prohibits employers from penalizing firefighters who are “absent from or late to work for up to 40 hours in any 12-month period in order to perform duties as a volunteer firefighter.”

Although [Rep. Duke Powell](#) (R-Burnsville) agreed that increasing the number of first responders was important, he said the amendment should be voted on separately from the bill. Rukavina withdrew his amendment when he received reassurance from the committee chair, [Rep. Tim Wilkin](#) (R-Eagan), that legislators would work with him on the issue.

## TRANSPORTATION

### High-speed rail

Minnesotans could have a new high-speed mode of transportation to connect with nine other Midwestern states, under a bill considered by the [House Transportation Finance Committee](#) March 16.

[HF2871](#), sponsored by [Rep. Katie Sieben](#) (DFL-Newport), requests \$10 million in bonds for the completion of environmental and engineering work on a high-speed rail corridor connecting the Twin Cities to Chicago. The work is one aspect that must be completed before a total project cost can be determined.

As of 2004, eight other states were planning to take part in the [Midwest Regional Rail System](#): Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio and Wisconsin.

“I’m tired of being held hostage by Northwest Airlines. I’d like to have a viable alternative to go places,” said Washington County Commissioner Myra Peterson. An added bonus for funding the project is that the infrastructure is already in place for the 130-miles within the state, she added.

Station stops in Minnesota would include: St. Paul, Red Wing and Winona, with bus connections to Duluth, St. Cloud, Mankato and Rochester. Operating train speeds would be up to 110 mph, resulting in a 5.5-hour trip to Chicago. A typical roundtrip fare for business travelers would be \$200, while a leisure traveler’s ticket would be approximately \$150, said Mike Rogers, Washington County transportation planner.

Although the project was not included in the governor’s bonding proposal, the committee gave it a “medium priority” in its bonding recommendations to the [House Capital Investment Committee](#).

A companion bill, ([SF2791](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Sharon Marko](#) (DFL-Cottage Grove), awaits action in the [Senate Finance Committee](#).

### Plug ‘er up

Minnesota has the opportunity to set a national precedent of weaning the country off foreign oil and instead using plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, [Rep. Frank Hornstein](#) (DFL-Mpls) told the [House Transportation Committee](#) March 22.

Hornstein sponsors [HF3718](#), a bill that would declare that the state will purchase plug-in hybrid electric vehicles once they are available, and appropriates \$100,000 in fiscal year 2007 to Minnesota State University, Mankato to retrofit two flexible fuel vehicles to demonstrate the technology.

The bill was approved and now goes to the [House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee](#).

A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle is defined in the bill as, “a vehicle containing an internal combustion engine that also allows power to be delivered to the drive wheels by a battery-powered electric motor and that meets applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.”

Additionally, when the vehicle is connected to the electrical grid, it must be able to recharge its battery and transfer electricity to a utility, and have the ability to travel at least 20 miles powered by electricity.

“There needs to be statements from state and local governments across the country to the manufacturers that we are ready — that we are ready as a state to lead by example ... and we are serious, not just rhetorical, about lessening our dependence on foreign oil,” said Hornstein.

“We’ve got an ever increasing source of hybrid vehicles and an ever decreasing source of revenue,” said [Rep. Bernie Lieder](#) (DFL-Crookston), in reference to part of the state’s revenue source of the gas tax.

In some ways the loss of revenue would be the

### BLAZE GAZE



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

**John Schroers, front, president of the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Alliance and others, all wearing blaze orange hats, watch the House Taxes Committee March 16 discuss a bill that would dedicate a portion of the state sales tax to fund clean water efforts and game and fish enhancement projects.**





PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

**Mounds Park Academy seniors Rachel Payne, left, and Christopher Stal testify March 21 before the House Transportation Committee in support of a bill that would require organ and tissue donation information to be included in a driver's education curriculum.**

same if people bought fuel-efficient cars, said David Morris, vice president of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. He said there are a number of different ways to deal with the issue and one could quantify the amount of electricity for operating the cars to fund roads.

A companion bill ([SF3440](#)), sponsored by [Sen. D. Scott Dibble](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the [Senate State and Local Government Operations Committee](#).

### Hearts and bones donations needed

A minimum of 30 minutes of instruction related to organ and tissue donations could be part of driver's education curriculum.

[HF3401](#), sponsored by [Rep. Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul), would apply to public and private schools, and commercial driver training schools. Approved March 21 by the [House Transportation Committee](#), the bill goes to the House floor.

"The legislation ... is designed to significantly increase Minnesota's organ and tissue donation rate, which will ultimately save numerous lives," said Rachel Payne, a senior at Mounds Park Academy. Students from the school presented information from a study they conducted to support the legislation.

Current law simply requires that students be informed of their option to donate, and any additional information is voluntary, said Payne.

According to LifeSource, Upper Midwest Organ Procurement Organization, Inc., there are more than 90,000 men, women and children in the United States waiting for a transplant, including more than 2,300 in the Upper

Midwest; every 13 minutes another name is added to the national waiting list; and 17 people die each day while waiting for a transplant.

Organs and tissues that can be donated include: heart, lungs, kidneys, pancreas, liver, intestines, corneas, skin, veins, tendons, bone, bone marrow, heart valves and connective tissue.

A companion bill ([SF2646](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Chuck Wiger](#) (DFL-North St. Paul), awaits action by the full Senate.

### Light rail liability

With an expectation commuter rail lines would be using already-existing, privately owned freight railroad lines, private companies performing public services are looking for the same kind of liability protection as governmental entities.

[HF3656](#), sponsored by [Rep. Kathy Tingelstad](#) (R-Andover), would allow the transportation commissioner, or a public entity contracting with the commissioner, to contract with a railroad for use of the track. When they do so, it "must be afforded the immunities and liabilities of a public entity and its employees." Additionally, the bill allows for the purchasing of insurance for claims or damages.

Approved by the [House Transportation Committee](#) March 21, the bill now goes to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#).

"The practical impact of this is to eliminate exposure for punitive damages for any of the entities that may be providing service. Government entities are not obligated to pay for punitive damages," said Clifford Greene,

an attorney working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway.

[Rep. Mary Liz Holberg](#) (R-Lakeville) failed to amend the bill by striking the ability for a public entity to contract with a rail company. "What I'm trying to do here is leave this responsibility and additional power only with the commissioner of transportation ... and this is an expanded authority I think only should be granted to the commissioner."

The language works in conjunction with current laws that also reference the ability and authority for the commissioner to contract with another authority, and matches up with current statutes, said Bob McFarlin, assistant to the transportation commissioner.

A companion bill, ([SF3246](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Don Betzold](#) (DFL-Fridley), awaits action in the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#).

### Restrictions on teen drivers

The [House Transportation Committee](#) approved a bill March 22 that would restrict the number of passengers first-year drivers can have in a car, and their operating a vehicle during certain hours.

[HF3050](#), sponsored by [Rep. Pete Nelson](#) (R-Lindstrom), would restrict those under age 18, in their first year of driving, from operating a vehicle having more than one passenger under the age of 21, except for immediate family members, and between midnight and 5 a.m., unless they have a note from the parent or guardian.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

"The crash rate for teens rises significantly as the number of passengers increases," Nelson said. "There is no insurance policy worth any amount of money, no matter how large that amount is; there is no amount of tears from family and friends that can ever breathe another breath of life into a teenager that has just become another traffic fatality," he said. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for Minnesota teens, he added.

Testifying in favor of the bill, Gail Weinholzer, director of public affairs for AAA Minnesota/Iowa, said Minnesota is one of only six states that have neither a passenger nor nighttime driving restriction. "The majority of teen fatalities happen between dusk and dawn," she said.

Not everyone was as supportive.

"You're violating the parents' rights" in having some kind of say in what their children are doing, said [Rep. Bruce Anderson](#) (R-Buffalo Township).

A companion bill ([SF3033](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Sean Nienow](#) (R-Cambridge), awaits action by the full Senate.

## Rough start for reform

Critics pick apart governor's immigration initiatives

By Nick Busse

Immigration reform might be on the way, but it will have to run a gauntlet to get here.

On March 21, the session's most comprehensive and controversial immigration bill got its first hearing before the [House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee](#).

HF3308, sponsored by [Rep. Steve Smith](#) (R-Mound), reflects Gov. Tim Pawlenty's immigration policy initiatives. It addresses a number of issues, including identity theft, identity fraud, tracking people's immigration status, computer crime, human trafficking, and penalties for employers who violate federal immigration laws.

At the hearing, 19 people testified in opposition to the bill, representing groups as diverse as law enforcement associations, the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union and a Lutheran church. No one testified in favor of the bill.

The consensus was the bill needs work.

### Raising concerns

Although some of the bill's provisions — such as stiffer penalties for human trafficking and computer crimes — were relatively non-controversial, testifiers had a laundry list of objections to other parts of the bill.

Minnesota Police and Peace Officer Association Executive Director William Gillespie said certain provisions amount to a "usurpation of local authority," both in terms of law enforcement and of municipal governance.

Gillespie said the bill creates an "unfunded mandate" for police and sheriff's departments to do the work of federal immigration authorities at a time when the federal government is cutting aid to local law enforcement.

"Where's the money to cover the arrests, the processing?" Gillespie said, adding, "We didn't ask for this bill, and we don't want it."

Commander Bill Martinez of the St. Paul Police Department said that the bill would undermine public safety by discouraging witnesses in criminal investigations from coming forward for fear of arrest or deportation because of their immigration status.

"Enforcing immigration laws ignores the tested benefits of community policing in favor of a police state for immigrants," Martinez said.

Martinez, a 20-year law enforcement veteran, added that the bill's proposed increased penalties for using fraudulent identification would result in felony charges for college kids trying to buy alcohol with a fake ID.

Representatives of law enforcement weren't the only ones raising concerns.

Volunteer lobbyist Richard Neumeister spoke against an article in the bill calling for the use of facial-recognition technology in state-issued ID cards and driver's licenses. The article would create a database of biometric images of state residents, and allow state agencies to share that information with certain public and private organizations.

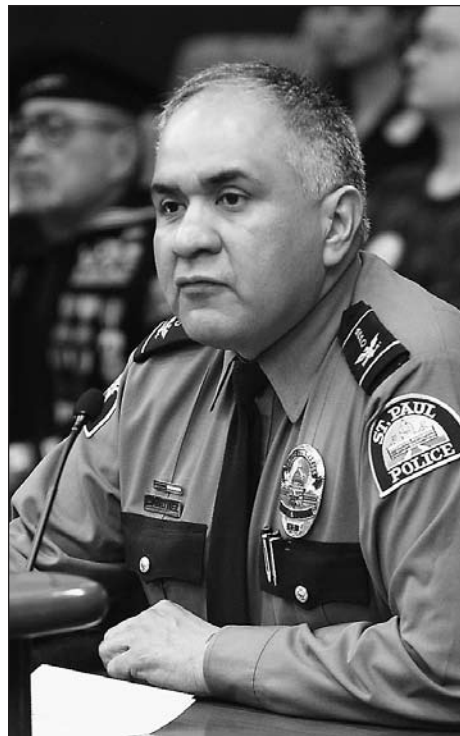


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

St. Paul Police Commander Bill Martinez testifies before the House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee March 21 in opposition to the "status check" provision in the omnibus immigration and identity theft bill.

"That needs to be flushed out," Neumeister said.

Teresa Nelson, legal counsel with the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union, agreed with Neumeister, citing government studies that conclude facial recognition technology is inaccurate.

Tony Arellano, a private citizen and Vietnam veteran, said that he is frequently stopped by law enforcement officers who think he is running drugs purely on the basis of his Hispanic appearance.

"I run around in a Suburban, an SUV, with 'Combat Vet' plates on it. Still, the question is, 'What are you doing? Why are you traveling?' I'm not sure if any of you have been stopped that way," he told committee members.

### A "first run-by"

Some committee members dismissed the overwhelmingly negative testimony on the bill as a product of misunderstanding.

"I feel the bill has been maligned and criticized before we got off the bat here," said [Rep. Tony Cornish](#) (R-Good Thunder). "Just because the feds aren't doing anything doesn't mean that, at the state level, we should just stick our heads in the sand and ignore the problem."

Cornish noted that states like Arizona suffer from growing health care costs and other expenses related to illegal immigration.


Smith said he is concerned about some of the testimony he heard — particularly the allegation that certain provisions in the bill would be detrimental to public safety — and said he was open to suggestions on how to improve the bill.

"This was a first run-by," Smith said. "I want to give it another chance."

At least one member is unlikely to vote for the bill no matter what changes are made.

"The provisions of this bill are far too onerous for my community and to the state of Minnesota, and to be honest, I don't expect that they're going to change that dramatically," said [Rep. Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul).

The bill was approved without recommendation and re-referred to the [House Civil Law and Elections Committee](#), with the understanding that it would return to the [House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee](#) again later in the session.

A companion bill ([SF3117](#)), sponsored by [Sen. Betsy Wergin](#) (R-Princeton), awaits action in the [Senate Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee](#). 

# Leaving a legacy

Three years of work for clean water now moves forward



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

A coalition has been working for more than three years to develop a plan to bring the state into compliance with the federal Clean Water Act.

By IRENE VOTH

The proposed Clean Water Legacy Act — officially [HF826/SF762](#)\* — could be the legislation that will cautiously allow development to move ahead in regions of the state with impaired waters, while at the same time facilitating the clean up of those waters.

This is good news for a host of people and groups, from building contractors to farmers to wildlife enthusiasts, all of whom are considered stakeholders in the clean up. A core coalition of 16 groups — referred to as the G-16 — has worked for more than three years to develop a plan to bring the state into compliance with the federal Clean Water Act, which states that a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit may not be issued for a new pollutant source when its discharge will cause or contribute to the impairment of waters with impaired status.

That plan has come to be known as the Clean Water Legacy Act, sponsored in the House by [Rep. Dennis Ozment](#) (R-Rosemount) and in the Senate by [Sen. Dennis Frederickson](#) (R-New Ulm).

“We are still together, we have been together — the business community, the agricultural community, the environmental community and local government for the past three years in working on this legislation,” Mike Robertson told the [House Agriculture](#),

[Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee](#) March 21. The committee is chaired by Ozment.

An environmental consultant for the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, Robertson said the outcome of a lawsuit against the state by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy has added a certain urgency to passing the legislation this session.

The Minnesota Court of Appeals decided in August that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency violated the federal Clean Water Act by issuing a wastewater treatment permit to Annandale and Maple Lake, cities that planned the construction of a joint project located within the watershed of two impaired bodies of water, Lake Pepin and the North Fork of the Crow River. While the state is appealing the ruling, the MPCA has specified that new projects that would discharge wastewater pollutants into the Lake Pepin watershed cannot be permitted until a total maximum daily load (TMDL) of pollutants and a cleanup plan is in place.

Robertson told the committee that 60 projects await wastewater discharge permits, since adequate funding has not been available to complete the required TMDLs for the waters already determined to be impaired.

The MPCA’s most recent data states that 2,274 individual TMDLs are needed, as 1,008


lakes and 296 rivers and creeks are listed as impaired, although only 16 percent of the lakes and 10 percent of the streams in the state have been assessed so far.

“We see this to be an ongoing threat that will be there for many years to come if we do not begin to address this serious problem,” Robertson said.

The good news is that the supplemental budget announced March 14 by Gov. Tim Pawlenty allocates \$20 million to implement the Clean Water Legacy Act.

Kristin Applegate, MPCA deputy commissioner, said the funding will specifically facilitate the MPCA’s assessment and monitoring of the state’s waters. She added that the policies in the legislation also clarify the procedures necessary to permit wastewater discharge into already impaired waters.

The bill was approved by the Senate last year and sent to the House. In a March 23 committee hearing, Ozment moved and the committee approved a “delete-everything” amendment containing most of the original bill’s provisions. As amended, the bill now includes \$20 million in funding from the governor’s proposed supplementary budget and additional \$20 million in bonding.

The committee also approved the bill as amended and re-referred it to the House Ways and Means Committee. 



## Monday, March 20

### HF3659-Urdahl (R)

**Agriculture & Rural Development**  
Dairy investment credit provided relating to income and corporate franchise tax.

### HF3660-Johnson, J. (R)

**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Children of incarcerated parents mentoring grant provided and money appropriated.

### HF3661-Samuelson (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Chemical health services interstate contracts provided.

### HF3662-Urdahl (R)

**Environment & Natural Resources**  
Environmental review and assessment required to include information on both favorable and adverse impacts.

### HF3663-Klinzing (R)

**Commerce & Financial Institutions**  
Building contractors; actions authorized against a contractor for failure to pay an arbitration award or judgment related to the work.

### HF3664-Cybart (R)

**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
National Guard security guards authorized to carry certain machine guns and short-barreled shotguns.

### HF3665-McNamara (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Veterans Homes Board authorized to conduct certain meetings by telephone or other electronic means.

### HF3666-Davids (R)

**Agriculture & Rural Development**  
Second Harvest Heartland food bank milk purchase grant provided and money appropriated.

### HF3667-Gunther (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Chiropractors advertising restrictions implemented.

### HF3668-Gunther (R)

**Regulated Industries**  
Public Facilities Authority bonding authority increased.

### HF3669-Brod (R)

**Taxes**  
County voting machine purchasing sales tax exemption provided.

### HF3670-Hamilton (R)

**Agriculture & Rural Development**  
Food law commercial feed definitions, rulemaking and other provisions modified.

### HF3671-Dill (DFL)

**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
State forest roads and bridges repair and upgrade funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

### HF3672-Davnie (DFL)

**Education Policy & Reform**  
Minnesota Early Learning Foundation duties expanded and money appropriated.

### HF3673-Nelson, P. (R)

**Environment & Natural Resources**  
Individual sewage treatment system provisions modified.

### HF3674-Paymar (DFL)

**Civil Law & Elections**  
Hmong marriage solemnization provided, Mej Koob requirements provided, criminal penalties imposed for solemnizing a prohibited marriage, and filing requirements clarified for certain Quaker marriages.

### HF3675-Demmer (R)

**Agriculture & Rural Development**  
Farm enhancement loan program established and money appropriated.

### HF3676-Goodwin (DFL)

**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
St. Anthony; Silver Lake Special Recreation Feature development provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

### HF3677-Brod (R)

**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
Office of Entrepreneurship established and money appropriated.

### HF3678-Hilstrom (DFL)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Chemical use assessments modified and chemical health duties of human services commissioner provided.

### HF3679-Ellison (DFL)

**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Hennepin County fine distribution provided.

### HF3680-Davnie (DFL)

**Civil Law & Elections**  
Driver's license application and vehicle registration data permissible uses restricted, bulk sales and resale of individual records prohibited, highly restricted information disclosure prohibited and fees imposed for permissible users.

### HF3681-Zellers (R)

**Civil Law & Elections**  
Driver's license and motor vehicle records personal information bulk distribution prohibited, fees established, public safety and financial crimes account established and money appropriated.

### HF3682-Abrams (R)

**Transportation Finance**  
Metropolitan area transit and paratransit additional financing provided.

### HF3683-Hamilton (R)

**Taxes**  
Employer-provided education tax credit provided for employers who provide English and citizenship education to their employees.

### HF3684-Samuelson (R)

**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
Day care providers authorized to use an alternative to chlorine bleach as a disinfectant in diaper changing areas.

### HF3685-Davnie (DFL)

**Education Finance**  
Limited English proficiency program funding limit removed.

### HF3686-Hortman (DFL)

**Commerce & Financial Institutions**  
Identity theft; standards created for disposal of personal information limit the potential for identity theft.

### HF3687-Sykora (R)

**Education Finance**  
School boards authorized to annually increase operating levy by the rate of inflation.

### HF3688-Hamilton (R)

**Commerce & Financial Institutions**  
Electronic financial terminals regulation relating to out-of-state financial institutions repealed and regulation relating to the expenses of organizing and incorporating banks repealed.

### HF3689-Abeler (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Language interpreter services required for health plan and Medical Assistance enrollees.

### HF3690-Eastlund (R)

**Higher Education Finance**  
Tuition increase limits established for public postsecondary institutions.

### HF3691-Meslow (R)

**Civil Law & Elections**  
Notice requirements modified for unlicensed dogs that are seized.

### HF3692-Powell (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Health care and Medical Assistance provisions modified.

### HF3693-Lanning (R)

**State Government Finance**  
Legislators' forum provided and money appropriated.

### HF3694-Abeler (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Registration and control of carcinogenic and endocrine disrupting pesticides provided.

### HF3695-Marquart (DFL)

**Transportation**  
Drivers' license examinations required to include knowledge of precautions around large trucks.

### HF3696-Abrams (R)

**Transportation Finance**  
International economic development zone final designation and zone duration delayed, corresponding tax incentive dates modified, foreign trade powers application authorized and grants extended.

### HF3697-Bradley (R)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Health and human services supplemental appropriations, transfers and reductions provided; programs established and regulated; studies and reports required; and money appropriated.

### HF3698-Abrams (R)

**Education Finance**  
Independent School District No. 270, Hopkins, fund transfer authorized.

### HF3699-Huntley (DFL)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Presumptive disability established for Medical Assistance eligibility.

### HF3700-Huntley (DFL)

**Health Policy & Finance**  
Chronic kidney disease management guidelines established.

### HF3701-Eken (DFL)

**Education Finance**  
Independent School District No. 601, Fosston, account transfer authorized.

### HF3702-Dorman (R)

**Education Finance**  
Independent School District No. 242, Alden-Conger, fund transfer authorized.

### HF3703-Dean (R)

**Education Policy & Reform**  
Teachers renewing license required to retake exam in fields which they are licensed.

**HF3704-Koenen (DFL)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Peace officers required to renew first responder certification every four years.

**HF3705-Hansen (DFL)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Lake Superior ballast water discharge regulation established, and regional cooperation and formation of invasive species coalition required.

**HF3706-Abeler (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Town clerks required to maintain office hours on the day before a town election.

**HF3707-Emmer (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Election judge certification by municipalities authorized.

**HF3708-Walker (DFL)****Education Policy & Reform**

Comprehensive family life and sexuality education programs provided.

**HF3709-Garofalo (R)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Credit reporting agencies and employee licensure clarified as not requiring private detectives license.

**HF3710-Slawik (DFL)****Civil Law & Elections**

Elected officials authorized to access multiple unit dwellings unaccompanied by a candidate for election.

**HF3711-Hackbarth (R)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Petroleum fund compensation for transport vehicles provisions modified and money appropriated.

**HF3712-Hackbarth (R)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Mercury Emissions Reduction Act of 2006 adopted requiring mercury emissions by public utilities.

**HF3713-Smith (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Fire safety account established from revenues on fire premiums and assessments, fire insurance tax abolished, policyholder surcharge established and money appropriated.

**HF3714-Johnson, J. (R)****Health Policy & Finance**

Methamphetamine coordinator established within the Health Department and money appropriated.

**HF3715-Emmer (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Absentee ballots received after the close of the polls on Election Day classified as inactive voters.

**HF3716-Anderson, B. (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Ballot distribution required in conformity with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Voter Act and money appropriated.

**HF3717-Hornstein (DFL)****Transportation**

Flexible-fuel vehicle targets provided and task force on plug-in hybrid electric vehicles established.

**HF3718-Hornstein (DFL)****Transportation**

State purchasing of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles required in certain bid documents, funding provided to retrofit flexible fuel vehicles to operate as plug-in hybrid vehicles and money appropriated.

**HF3719-Hornstein (DFL)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Ford Plant Enhancement Commission established.

**HF3720-Hornstein (DFL)****Transportation**

Flexible-fuel vehicle targets provided, task force on plug-in hybrid electric vehicles established, St. Paul Ford plant enhancement commission created, studies required, grant provided and money appropriated.

**HF3721-Johnson, J. (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Interpreter services regulation modified relating to precinct caucuses.

**HF3722-Howes (R)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Tracking report required for new wastewater facilities, and bids for new facilities required to include information on operating costs during the first five years of operation.

**HF3723-Johnson, J. (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Interpreter assistance for deaf voters requirement eliminated.

**HF3724-Haws (DFL)****Civil Law & Elections**

Absentee ballots for a special election authorized in person at any county in the district, and special elections prohibited near national holidays.

**HF3725-Meslow (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force established, grants provided and money appropriated.

**HF3726-Powell (R)****Health Policy & Finance**

Prescription drug prior authorization limited under Medical Assistance.

**HF3727-Hamilton (R)****State Government Finance**

Worthington; veterans' memorial funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3728-Demmer (R)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

University of Minnesota and Mayo Clinic joint research in biotechnology and medical genomics funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3729-Mullery (DFL)****Civil Law & Elections**

Parole and probation authorities provided with access to records relating to handgun permits.

**HF3730-Scalze (DFL)****Regulated Industries**

Geothermal heat pump study funding provided.

**HF3731-Moe (DFL)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Youth operation of all-terrain vehicles provisions modified.

**HF3732-Sailer (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

Critical access dental providers reimbursement rates increased, budget change requests required and money appropriated.

**HF3733-Eken (DFL)****Education Policy & Reform**

Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities additional teacher instruction required and advisory task force established.

**HF3734-Peterson, S. (DFL)****Taxes**

Local Government Aid need measure adjusted and appropriation increased.

**HF3735-Clark (DFL)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Food stamp asset limit modified.

**HF3736-Nelson, M. (DFL)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Child care provider rates and fees modified, Minnesota Family Investment Program provisions modified, foreign operating corporation tax provision modified and money appropriated from the tax relief account.

**HF3737-Rukavina (DFL)****Taxes**

Minnesota Minerals 21st Century Funds apportioned.

**HF3738-Johnson, R. (DFL)****Education Finance**

Supportive community partnership grants provided and money appropriated.

**HF3739-Otremba (DFL)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Canoe and boating route markings modified and money appropriated.

**HF3740-Nelson, M. (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

Health insurance dependent coverage age limit modified for full-time students.

**HF3741-Greiling (DFL)****Education Finance**

Voluntary full-day kindergarten funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3742-Simon (DFL)****Transportation Finance**

I-394 corridor light rail feasibility study required and money appropriated.

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**Tuesday, March 21**
**HF3743-Juhnke (DFL)****Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

State Designer Selection Board expiration date specified.

**HF3744-Sykora (R)****Education Finance**

Pre-kindergarten through grade 12, and early childhood, family and adult education forecast adjustments provided; and money appropriated.

**HF3745-Peterson, N. (R)****Transportation Finance**

Metropolitan transit service contract requirements modified.

**HF3746-Nelson, P. (R)****Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Natural resources funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3747-Simpson (R)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Motor fuel franchises regulation and exemption provided.

**HF3748-Klinzing (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

Early childhood health and developmental screening and notice requirements clarified.

**HF3749-Howes (R)****Taxes**

Breezy Point sales and use tax and motor vehicle excise tax authorized, funds use specified and bonds issued.

**HF3750-Gunther (R)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota grant provided and money appropriated.

**HF3751-Nelson, P. (R)**  
**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Harris; fire truck funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3752-Nelson, P. (R)**  
**Transportation Finance**  
Trunk Highway 95 bridge construction provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3753-Abrams (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Sales-only apportionment factor phase-in accelerated relating to apportionment of net income tax.

**HF3754-Howes (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
Right to affordable health care provided by proposed constitutional amendment.

**HF3755-Dempsey (R)**  
**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
Prevailing wages payment regulated.

**HF3756-Erhardt (R)**  
**Transportation Finance**  
I-494 improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3757-Abeler (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
State health care programs study required to consider the feasibility of consolidating all state-funded health care programs into a single sliding-fee-ability-to-pay program and money appropriated.

**HF3758-Simon (DFL)**  
**Commerce & Financial Institutions**  
Rental vehicle damage liability coverage time period extended for coverage on the renter's own auto insurance.

**HF3759-Urdahl (R)**  
**Education Policy & Reform**  
School bus equipment standards updated, discipline policies and cost data clarified and license standards modified.

**HF3760-Wilkin (R)**  
**Commerce & Financial Institutions**  
Insurance form approvals, coverages, filings, utilization reviews and claims regulated.

**HF3761-Holberg (R)**  
**Transportation Finance**  
Motor vehicle sales tax revenue allocation modified.

**HF3762-Tingelstad (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislative training forums established under oversight of the Legislative Coordinating Commission and money appropriated.

**HF3763-Tingelstad (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Budget bill contents limited and conference committee procedures specified.

**HF3764-Tingelstad (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
State government procurement provisions modified.

**HF3765-Tingelstad (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Center for Health Care Purchasing Improvement established and money appropriated.

**HF3766-Vandevveer (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Back taxes imposed on transfers of exempt property.

**HF3767-Beard (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Small biomass electric generation facility property tax exemption eligibility period for commencement of construction extended.

**HF3768-Beard (R)**  
**Regulated Industries**  
Scott County ethanol plant clarified as not in violation of the exclusive service territory law.

**HF3769-Welti (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Plainview-Elgin Sanitary District sales tax exemption provided.

**HF3770-Mariani (DFL)**  
**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Policing immigrant communities best practices course required and money appropriated.

**HF3771-Bradley (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
Medical practice board examination provision modified relating to active military service.

**HF3772-Dittrich (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Champlin Civic Center/Public Safety Building construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

**HF3773-Dean (R)**  
**Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
Stillwater flood control levee project funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3774-Bradley (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
False driver's license penalties increased, fraudulent identification cards crime established, sale and manufacture penalties increased,

immigrant status verification modified and reporting of undocumented immigrants required.

**HF3775-Mariani (DFL)**  
**State Government Finance**  
Minnesota Historical Society funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3776-Howes (R)**  
**Civil Law & Elections**  
Opium included in the list of controlled substances used during pregnancy for purposes of civil commitment and child maltreatment reporting.

## **Wednesday, March 22**

**HF3777-Gunther (R)**  
**Education Policy & Reform**  
Early childhood family education teachers removed from definition of public employee.

**HF3778-Davids (R)**  
**Rules & Legislative Administration**  
Railroads; Congress memorialized by resolution to support HR3318, the Railroad Antitrust and Competition Enhancement Act.

**HF3779-Urdahl (R)**  
**Local Government**  
Adults-only businesses required to give notice to a city or county of intent to conduct business and zoning authorities granted.

**HF3780-McNamara (R)**  
**Civil Law & Elections**  
Workers' compensation appeal procedures and notice of coverage provisions modified.

**HF3781-Tingelstad (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislative training forums provided, schedule established for consideration of legislation, budget bill content limited, conference committee procedures specified and money appropriated.

**HF3782-Urdahl (R)**  
**Education Finance**  
Basic library system support grants funding increased.

**HF3783-Buesgens (R)**  
**Education Policy & Reform**  
Charter schools renewed contract for a sponsor's authorization time period extended.

**HF3784-Hamilton (R)**  
**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
Extended employment services for persons with severe disabilities bade appropriation redefined and money appropriated.

**HF3785-Abeler (R)**  
**Health Policy and Finance**  
Community benefits report required from licensed hospitals.

**HF3786-Tingelstad (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Postal service; President and Congress memorialized by resolution to maintain current levels of postal service.

**HF3787-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Education Finance**  
Independent School District No. 750, Rocori, authorized to lease administrative space.

**HF3788-Anderson, B. (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Electric generating facilities property tax abatement process modified.

**HF3789-Westerberg (R)**  
**State Government Finance**  
Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission renewed leases authorized.

**HF3790-Cybart (R)**  
**Higher Education Finance**  
Dakota County Technical College land purchase funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3791-Loeffler (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislature; schedule established for consideration of legislation, funding provided for governor-elect and 2007 legislative forums and money appropriated.

**HF3792-Davids (R)**  
**Civil Law & Elections**  
Government data copying fees calculation modified.

**HF3793-Davids (R)**  
**Regulated Industries**  
Renewable sources requirements for retail electricity and liquid fuel provided.

**HF3794-Davids (R)**  
**Regulated Industries**  
Gasoline fuel retailers selling three or more octane grades required to replace the middle grade with E85 fuel.

**HF3795-Davids (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
Waivered services overspending allowances established for counties.

**HF3796-Hoppe (R)**  
**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Aiding and offender crime venue expanded.

**HF3797-Howes (R)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources**  
4x4 truck use restricted on public lands.



**HF3798-Loeffler (DFL)****Taxes**

Property tax statements required to contain additional information on targeting and special property tax refund eligibility.

**HF3799-Cox (R)****Education Finance**

School district in statutory operating debt levy authorized.

**HF3800-Eastlund (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

Minnesota Child, Family and School Communications Protection Act adopted.

**HF3801-Atkins (DFL)****Transportation Finance**

Trunk Highway 55 and Yankee Doodle Road interchange funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3802-Simon (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

Hennepin or Dakota county nursing home construction moratorium exception provided for a facility for persons with eating disorders.

**HF3803-Samuelson (R)****Health Policy & Finance**

Tetrahydrocannabinol and alcohol use by pregnant women mandatory reporting required, and human rights provision clarified.

**HF3804-Kahn (DFL)****Civil Law & Elections**

Genetic information held by government entities regulated and reports required.

**HF3805-Vandever (R)****Transportation**

Shawn Silvera Memorial Highway designated on I-35.

**HF3806-Buesgens (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

Charter schools authorized to lease or purchase district buildings, and use of state funds authorized to purchase land and buildings.

**HF3807-Buesgens (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

Charter school board of directors teacher majority requirement abolished; admission preference extended to children of teachers, staff and board members; and use of state funds to purchase land or buildings authorized.

**HF3808-Newman (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Driving while impaired felony imposed following a prior conviction for criminal vehicular homicide involving impaired driving.

**HF3809-Marquart (DFL)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Heartland Trail extended.

**HF3810-Penas (R)****Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Tuberculosis testing in cattle funding provided to the Board of Animal Health and money appropriated.

**HF3811-Penas (R)****Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Deer depopulation funding provided near tuberculosis-infected cattle herds and money appropriated.

**HF3812-Soderstrom (R)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Offender re-entry pilot project funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3813-Soderstrom (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Offender re-entry pilot project funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3814-Fritz (DFL)****Taxes**

Medford sales tax authorized and funds use specified.

**HF3815-Beard (R)****Regulated Industries**

Horse racing occupation license provision modified.

**HF3816-Clark (DFL)****Taxes**

Mattress manufacturers credit provided for meeting flame retardant standards.

**HF3817-Clark (DFL)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Minnesota Investment Fund purpose modified and project evaluation condition added.

**HF3818-Greiling (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

Mental health services reimbursement expanded.

**HF3819-Nelson, M. (DFL)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Independent contractor relationship written agreements required.

**HF3820-Sertich (DFL)****State Government Finance**

Nongovernmental Pharmaceutical Contracting Alliance funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3821-Sertich (DFL)****Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Legislative employees authorized to organize and select representatives to negotiate collective bargaining agreements.

**HF3822-Hornstein (DFL)****Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Sudan; state investment prohibited in companies with equity ties to Sudan.

**HF3823-Samuelson (R)****Health Policy and Finance**

Long-term care insurance required to cover licensed adult foster care and provider payment rate adjusted.

**HF3824-Vandever (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Mortgage redemption sales moved to the end of the current redemption period and redemption rights of the mortgagee eliminated.

**HF3825-Simpson (R)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Watershed district audit request requirements provided.

**HF3826-Newman (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Child support payments redirection authorized.

**HF3827-Marquart (DFL)****Taxes**

High school league tournaments exempted from admissions sales tax.

**HF3828-Clark (DFL)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Bioscience and biotechnology subsidy recipient reporting required.

**HF3829-Latz (DFL)****Transportation Finance**

McLeod County; railroad switching yard funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3830-Nelson, M. (DFL)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Day labor and temporary employment task force established.

**HF3831-Peterson, A. (DFL)****Civil Law & Elections**

Voting system for disabled voters requirement eliminated relating to local elections.

**HF3832-Hilty (DFL)****Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 577, Willow River, authorized to recognize its operating levy early pending approval of referendum.

**HF3833-Hilty (DFL)****Civil Law & Elections**

Post-election review process modified.

**HF3834-Hosch (DFL)****Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 750, Rocori, fund transfer authorized.

**HF3835-Hosch (DFL)****Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 750, Rocori, Project SERV grant provided and money appropriated.

**HF3836-Hansen (DFL)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Tree care licensing and regulation task force established.

**HF3837-Peterson, A. (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

Elementary and secondary school second inspection fee and statewide hospitality fee eliminated.

**HF3838-Moe (DFL)****Taxes**

Local government aid city aid base modified for certain cities.

**HF3839-Clark (DFL)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Bisphenol-A and phthalates prohibited in products for young children.

**HF3840-Peppin (R)****Taxes**

Taxpayer's Bill of Rights; state and local spending and tax increases limited and constitutional amendment proposed.

**HF3841-Garofalo (R)****Jobs & Economic****Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Prevailing wage public policy adopted and identifying signs required on contractor vehicles.

**HF3842-Samuelson (R)****Health Policy & Finance**

Home and community-based service providers employee scholarship program modified.

**HF3843-Koenen (DFL)****Agriculture & Rural Development**

Beginning farmer program tax credits provided and program administered by the Rural Finance Authority modified.

**HF3844-Meslow (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Expungement of criminal records law recodified and restructured.

**HF3845-Soderstrom (R)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Auctioneers regulated and money appropriated.

**HF3846-Kelliher (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

HIV information and referral service funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3847-Hilty (DFL)****Local Government**

Pine County drainage proceedings clarified.

**HF3848-Marquart (DFL)****Higher Education Finance**

Student use of alcohol or controlled substances disclosure to parents authorized.

**HF3849-Hilstrom (DFL)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Local correctional fees clarified.

**HF3850-Ozment (R)****Agriculture & Rural Development**

Farm wineries authorized to produce wines and fortified wines, amount of non-Minnesota produce that may be used in a farm winery operation increased and phase-in allowed for start-up operations.

**HF3851-Carlson (DFL)****Education Policy & Reform**

Blindness included in the definition of children's disabilities, and rule references updated.

**HF3852-Wagenius (DFL)****Regulated Industries**

Electric service utility costs recovery prohibited under certain circumstances and certificate of need barred.

**HF3853-Kohls (R)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Federal procurement assistance specialist position established and money appropriated.

**HF3854-Klinzing (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

Advanced placement and international baccalaureate programs increased participation provided in order to raise K-12 achievement and money appropriated.

**HF3855-Wardlow (R)****Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Congressional Medal of Honor recipients plaque authorized in the Court of Honor on the Capitol grounds.

**HF3856-Westrom (R)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Central Lakes Region Sanitary District sewer system funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3857-Lanning (R)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Employers authorized to use electronic means to provide earnings statements.

**HF3858-Hackbarth (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Abandoned vehicles, towers and impound lots provisions modified; abandoned vehicle account established; and money appropriated.

**HF3859-Paulsen (R)****Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Special session days counted as legislative days if the purpose of the special session is to pass major budget bills and constitutional amendment proposed.

**HF3860-Charron (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

High school redesign grants provided and money appropriated.

**HF3861-Magnus (R)****Taxes**

Native prairie taxation provisions modified.

**HF3862-Hilstrom (DFL)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

CHIPS working group recommendations implementation funding provided to the Board of Public Defense and money appropriated.

**HF3863-Johnson, J. (R)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Criminal sexual conduct in the third or fourth degree penalties imposed for nonconsensual sexual conduct involving cosmetic services.

**HF3864-Kelliher (DFL)****Transportation**

Minneapolis engine brakes restriction authorized.

**HF3865-Emmer (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Primary and general elections for the same office required to be held at same polling place.

**HF3866-Emmer (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Election judges authorized to transcribe machine-unreadable ballot cards.

**HF3867-Holberg (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Open meeting law length of time increased for giving notice of administrative opinion.

**HF3868-Holberg (R)****Civil Law & Elections**

Government records management requirements and emergency records preservation requirements modified.

**HF3869-Murphy (DFL)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

Victim Intervention Program, Inc., funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3870-Mahoney (DFL)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Deaf and hard-of-hearing employment programs base appropriation increased.

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**Thursday, March 23**

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**HF3871-Beard (R)****Transportation**

Model airport zoning ordinance required to limit height of objects around airports.

**HF3872-Davids (R)****Transportation**

Town bridge account financial assistance requirements modified.

**HF3873-Sertich (DFL)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Employers prohibited from requiring employees to attend mandatory meetings on politics or religion.

**HF3874-Olson (R)****Education Policy & Reform**

Regional library basic system support grant limitation repealed.

**HF3875-Tingelstad (R)****Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**

Labor grievance offers of settlement prior to arbitration provided, and costs assessed against a party refusing an offer of settlement that is more favorable than the final arbitration award.

**HF3876-Finstad (R)****Local Government**

County expenditure limit removed for soldiers' rest cemeteries.

**HF3877-Peppin (R)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Power limited technician licensing requirements eliminated.

**HF3878-Samuelson (R)****Health Policy & Finance**

Reverse mortgage incentive program established and money appropriated.

**HF3879-Abrams (R)****Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**

Supported employment definition modified relating to persons with disabilities.

**HF3880-Meslow (R)****Health Policy & Finance**

Breast and cervical cancer treatment medical assistance coverage expanded.

**HF3881-Cox (R)****Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 716, Belle Plaine, health and safety revenue use authorized.

**HF3882-Vandever (R)****Taxes**

Nonprofit community service-oriented organization class 4c property tax classification provided.

**HF3883-Peterson, A. (DFL)****Regulated Industries**

Renewable energy standards utility requirements provided.

**HF3884-Haws (DFL)****Public Safety Policy & Finance**

St. Cloud area gang strike force provided.

**HF3885-Kelliher (DFL)****Health Policy & Finance**

Hair transplant surgery facilities regulatory system established.

**HF3886-Sailer (DFL)****Transportation**

Tribal documents accepted as proof of identity when applying for a driver's license or for purposes of verifying a name change.

**HF3887-Mullery (DFL)****Local Government**

Hennepin County; Victory Memorial Drive Historic District restoration task force established.

**HF3888-Goodwin (DFL)****Regulated Industries**

Commerce Department utility assessment adjustments calendar quarter changed.

**HF3889-Kahn (DFL)****Taxes**

Relative homestead properties annual registration required.

**HF3890-Soderstrom (R)****Commerce & Financial Institutions**

Real estate appraiser trainees regulated; and appraiser education, experience and examination requirements modified.

**HF3891-Mahoney (DFL)**  
**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
University Enterprise Laboratories funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3892-Fritz (DFL)**  
**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
Medford wastewater treatment facility funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

**HF3893-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislative per diem payments prohibited during special sessions called due to failure of the Legislature to pass major budget bills.

**HF3894-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Permanent restraining orders created upon continued harassment.

**HF3895-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislature; identical bill introductions prohibited.

**HF3896-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Conference committee provisions required to have been passed by one or the other legislative body.

**HF3897-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislative sessions in even years required to be held after the February forecast.

**HF3898-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislature; entire Legislature allowed to vote on budget bills when the budget has not been passed.

**HF3899-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislators prohibited from introducing more than 20 bills in any biennium.

**HF3900-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Legislature; all bills required to be heard in committee.

**HF3901-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Bill introductions prohibited after the third legislative deadline.

**HF3902-Ellison (DFL)**  
**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Project SOAR prisoner re-entry program funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3903-Greiling (DFL)**  
**Education Finance**  
Scholars of distinction program continued and money appropriated.

**HF3904-Davnie (DFL)**  
**Commerce & Financial Institutions**  
Homeowner's insurance non-renewals regulated, and discriminatory practices prohibited in automobile and homeowner's insurance.

**HF3905-Seifert (R)**  
**State Government Finance**  
Southwest Minnesota State University disabled veterans ramps funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF3906-Cybart (R)**  
**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs**  
Essential employees definition modified to include firefighters.

**HF3907-Ozment (R)**  
**Public Safety Policy & Finance**  
Richfield disabled firefighter health care eligibility review provided.

**HF3908-Buesgens (R)**  
**Education Policy & Reform**  
Schools authorized to use an interdisciplinary teaching and learning program model.

**HF3909-Simon (DFL)**  
**Civil Law & Elections**  
City election runoff voting method authorized.

**HF3910-Paulsen (R)**  
**Education Policy & Reform**  
Chinese language curriculum program development provided and money appropriated.

**HF3911-Cox (R)**  
**Higher Education Finance**  
Resident tuition qualification requirements provided.

**HF3912-Lanning (R)**  
**Jobs & Economic Opportunity Policy & Finance**  
Housing Solutions Act adopted adjusting deed tax percentage, providing rental housing assistance, establishing an account for leverage opportunity and appropriating money.

**HF3913-Bradley (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
Critical access dental providers annual reimbursement schedules and limits required.

**HF3914-Latz (DFL)**  
**Civil Law & Elections**  
Child maltreatment act investigative and reporting responsibilities clarified.

**HF3915-Moe (DFL)**  
**Agriculture & Rural Development**  
Genetically engineered wild rice moratorium imposed in the event of an application for a test plot.

**HF3916-Brod (R)**  
**Health Policy & Finance**  
Pharmacy access program established and money appropriated.

**HF3917-Hosch (DFL)**  
**Local Government**  
Municipal boundary adjustment advisory task force established.

**This bill was inadvertently left out of last week's bill introductions.**

**Thursday, March 16**

**HF3658-Bradley (R)**  
**Health Policy and Finance**  
Business organizations authorized to obtain certificates of authority to operate as health maintenance organizations, pricing fairness provided, small health plan purchasing pools authorized, and health insurance tax imposed.

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## MINNESOTA INDEX

### Minnesota Weather

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Sources: Minnesota Climatology Working Group; [www.webexhibits.org](http://www.webexhibits.org); [www.shgresources.com](http://www.shgresources.com); Encyclopedia Britannica; [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

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