

SESSION WEEKLY



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A CLIFF-HANGER TO THE END
4,915 BILLS, 150 NEW LAWS
COUNTING EVERYBODY

LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

HF2503 - HF2552

SESSION WEEKLY

Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Services. During the 2007-2008 Legislative Session, each issue reports House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and provides other information. No fee.

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On the cover: The last days of session provide a flurry of activity outside the House Chamber, as seen in a multiple time-exposure image.

—Photo by: Andrew VonBank



A cliff-hanger to the end

Drama and suspense mark the closing of the 2007 session

By Nick Busse

When [House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher](#) (DFL-Mpls) dropped the final gavel on the 2007 legislative session at midnight on May 21, one thing was clear: it hadn't been a pretty ending.

Unfortunately, not much else was clear.

For the first time in eight years, legislators had finished the state budget on time — albeit not without Democrats using a series of unusual procedural maneuvers on the House floor, effectively silencing the Republican minority long enough to pass the last remaining budget bills before deadline.

Cliff-hanger continued on page 4

2008-09 Biennial State Budget

General Fund Spending (\$ in millions)

Category	Governor	House	Senate	Final
Property Tax Aids, Credits	\$3,207	\$3,648	\$3,570	\$3,233
E-12 Education	\$13,716	\$13,806	\$13,833	\$13,790
Higher Education	\$3,203	\$3,206	\$3,221	\$3,152
Health and Human Services	\$9,540	\$9,879	\$9,797	\$9,725
Environment, Energy and Natural Resources	\$422	\$431	\$411	\$440
Agriculture and Veterans	\$175	\$175	\$167	\$180
Economic Development	\$324	\$370	\$376	\$340
Transportation	\$398	\$244	\$300	\$251
Public Safety	\$1,878	\$1,890	\$1,876	\$1,877
State Government	\$606	\$544	\$541	\$656
Debt Service	\$913	\$1,039	\$1,069	\$906
Miscellaneous	\$148	\$126	\$134	\$130
Total	\$34,530	\$35,358	\$35,295	\$34,680
Percent Increase from 2006-07	9.8%	12.8%	11.9%	10.1%

Source: Department of Finance

But even after the dramatic final hours in the House Chamber, it wasn't immediately clear whether Gov. Tim Pawlenty would sign off on the approximately \$35 billion budget legislators were proposing. The governor's veto pen had already axed most of the DFL's original budget proposals, and a series of behind-closed-doors negotiations between Pawlenty and legislative leaders had yielded no final, rock-solid budget agreement. The threat of a special session loomed.

Adding to the suspense, DFL leadership made the unusual move of waiting to present the governor with the last four bills until after Memorial Day weekend — more than a week after they were passed. Kelliher said she wanted to give Pawlenty adequate time to complete his work, but some speculated the move was intended to allow time for pressure to be put on the governor to sign the tax bill, which he had threatened to veto.

The suspense ended May 30 when Pawlenty signed the necessary spending bills — after trimming them down with a series of line-item vetoes.

The tax bill, however, didn't survive the process. Angered over the last-minute insertion of a provision that would have required state budget forecasts to include inflationary increases, Pawlenty vetoed the bill, putting the kyboshes on \$75 million in local government aid, \$33 million in property

tax refunds and subsidies for a Mall of America expansion and other local projects.

By the end of session, Pawlenty had torpedoed many DFL proposals, including one that sought to provide more than \$450 million in property tax relief by raising income taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans. Other legislation that ended up on the cutting room floor this year included a 10-cent gas tax increase to pay for transportation improvements

(later lowered to 7.5 cents); a statewide school employees health insurance pool; and a constitutional amendment to dedicate new sales tax revenue to the environment and the arts.

When all was said and done, the state ended up with a budget that increased overall spending by just over 10 percent. Legislative successes of note include: a statewide smoking ban, major energy reforms, funding increases for E-12 and higher education, expanded



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

House Majority Leader Tony Sertich, from left, House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher and House Minority Leader Marty Seifert confer prior to the beginning of the final floor session May 21. Chief Clerk Al Mathiowetz and First Assistant Chief Clerk Patrick Murphy also wait for the session to begin.

health care coverage for children and increased funding for clean waters.

In the days following adjournment, all sides claimed victory. House and Senate leaders and the governor alike cast a positive light on the session.

High drama in the chamber

With mere hours left before the midnight adjournment deadline — and the bulk of the state's budget yet to be acted on — the scene on the House floor May 21 started as a virtual repeat of the preceding four-and-a-half months, with the House Republican minority taking its time grilling Democrats on provisions in their bills.

From the Republicans' perspective, it was only fair. They were being asked to vote on legislation worth billions of Minnesota taxpayer dollars — legislation that had been stalled in conference committees for weeks, and which many Republicans had never even seen before.

"They dumped 500-page bills on our desks with no time to even know what's in them," said [House Minority Leader Marty Seifert](#) (R-Marshall).

But the Democrats saw it differently. Citing a pattern of similar behavior throughout the session, [House Majority Leader Tony Sertich](#) (DFL-Chisholm) accused the Republicans of filibustering, trying to drag the Legislature into yet another special session. In order to finish on time, he decided extraordinary measures were necessary.

Using a rarely invoked parliamentary procedure, Sertich, with the help of Kelliher and the 83 other DFL House members, shut down debate, effectively silencing the Republicans and forcing votes on several of the session's most important bills.

The atmosphere in the chamber quickly deteriorated, with indignant legislators shouting over one another and Kelliher outright ignoring the Republicans. Sertich admitted the move was ugly and unfortunate, but he said it was necessary.

"Tonight we had the session down to the 1-yard line, and the minority caucus got called on a delay of game," Sertich told reporters at a press conference minutes after adjournment. "It got a little bumpy, but we do have a responsibility to finish."

Seifert had his own football metaphor, however. Referring to the former head coach of the Minnesota Vikings, he accused

the Democrats of "Denny Green time management."

"They did 75 percent of the budget in less than six hours, and that is simply outrageous," he said.

Plagued by partisan troubles

It started out as a rough year for Republicans. In November 2006, the Democrats regained control of the House in a midterm election turnover, securing for themselves a muscular 85-49 majority in an electoral beating that left [Rep. Steve Sviggum](#) (R-Kenyon), House speaker for the previous eight years, in tears, literally, at a press conference a day later.

Not long after, both DFL and Republican leaders set about reassuring the public — and each other — that efforts would be made to work together in a bipartisan fashion. Less than two weeks into session, however, the stage was set for partisan squabbling when Republicans used the occasion of a supposedly noncontroversial federal tax conformity bill to challenge the new DFL majority's grip on power.

The three-hour tussle that ensued was only the first in a series of lengthy and sometimes heated floor debates that eventually led Sertich and others to accuse some Republicans of trying to "gum up the works" by stalling key pieces of legislation.

Frustrated by Pawlenty's ever-busy veto pen and by what they viewed as Republican obstructionism, some Democrats accused the Republicans of interfering with the will of the people.

"Under Republican control, property taxes went up on the middle class. Under Republican control, fees went up on all of the middle class.

Under Republican control, college tuition went up. ... And you know what the voters did? They elected all of us — the 85 of us — to come down to this House and direct the policy for this state," [Rep. Nora Slawik](#) (DFL-Maplewood) told her fellow lawmakers during a May 11 floor debate on a tax bill.

Some Republicans, meanwhile, claimed that DFL leaders had overestimated their mandate, having been swept into power

by of a wave of anti-Republican sentiment stemming largely from external circumstances — namely congressional corruption scandals, President Bush's plummeting approval ratings and the increasingly costly war in Iraq. Sviggum said as much in his post-election press conference, and [Rep. Tony Cornish](#) (R-Good Thunder) articulated the notion clearly when he responded to Slawik's speech on the floor.

"You're here because of an Iraq war and a positively unpopular president," Cornish told the Democrats.

"At a certain stage in time, the pendulum swung your way. And the thing I love is, you think you're here for all the liberal reasons you stand for, and that's just not true."

Democrats needed only to recruit five Republicans to reach the two-thirds majority needed to override a

gubernatorial veto; however, under Seifert's leadership, the Republicans held firm, keeping the ever-enticing possibility of an override always just out of reach and allowing Pawlenty to block key Democratic initiatives — even the transportation bill, which had the support of a handful of Republicans.

Those initiatives aren't dead yet, however. The House and Senate are scheduled to reconvene at noon on Feb. 12, 2008. When they do, much of the legislation that didn't make it through the process this year is likely to be taken up again.

Bills authorizing state funding of stem cell research, legalizing the medical use of marijuana, creating dedicated funding for the outdoors and the arts, and millions of dollars worth of bonding projects are all candidates to be revived in 2008.

"We are committed to coming back and doing the work that we left on the table," Sertich said. 🗽



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

The session countdown clock zeroed out at midnight May 21.

"You're here because of an Iraq war and a positively unpopular president. At a certain stage in time, the pendulum swung your way. And the thing I love is, you think you're here for all the liberal reasons you stand for, and that's just not true."

— Rep. Tony Cornish

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select bills heard and acted on in the House May 17- 21 and other House activity. To track the progress of a bill, go to www.leg.mn and click on Bill Search, Status and MyBills. Designations used in Highlight summaries: HF-House File; SF-Senate File; CH-Chapter; and *- the bill version considered by the House, or the bill language signed by the governor.

BUSINESS

Replacing the Metrodome

Members of the House Taxes Committee were privy to the goal of the Vikings' 2008 legislative session game plan May 18 when plans for a new \$954 million retractable roof multi-purpose stadium were shared. No action was taken.

The stadium would be located on the current Metrodome site "to meet the needs of the next generation of sports fans," said Roy Terwilliger, chairman of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission.

With the Minnesota Twins and University of Minnesota each building their own stadiums and the Vikings' Metrodome lease up in 2011, there is urgency to act on stadium funding during the 2008 session, Terwilliger said. "This is our last chance to have a climate-controlled facility to hold major events."

Terwilliger said renovating the Metrodome, which opened in 1982, is not an economically viable option. However, building on the site would "maximize tax dollars," he said, because the public infrastructure is in place to support the neighborhood redevelopment the team envisions.

Team officials hope the new stadium would open in 2012. The team would likely play at the University of Minnesota during construction. A new stadium there is expected to open in 2009.



Illustration courtesy of the Minnesota Vikings

An artist's rendering of the new proposed Minnesota Vikings stadium complex.

A presentation breaking down private/public funding percentages of recently built stadiums prompted [Rep. Paul Marquart](#) (DFL-Dilworth) to question: "What are you going to be asking of us?"

While hedging on what the financial request might be, Terwilliger, a former state senator, left little doubt that the Metrodome's future will be on the legislative docket. "We all know the numbers are vague. It is going to take some hard work to establish the level of appropriate funding."

— L. SCHUTZ

EMPLOYMENT

Independent contractor licensure

A bill that would shield employers when hiring certain contractors received House approval.

It would require independent residential and commercial construction contractors to get a certificate from the [Department of Labor and Industry](#), which would exempt them from having workers' compensation paid on them by an employer. The two-year certificate would cost \$150.

"This protects contractors that hire them as independent contractors so they don't end up being employees of theirs, a situation where 'I'm an independent contractor and I work for you, but I don't have this certificate. I fall off the roof and now I become your employee because I don't have the certificate and you're liable for my workers' compensation,'" said [Rep. Mike Nelson](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park), who sponsors [HF1283*/SF1103](#) with [Sen. Satveer Chaudhary](#) (DFL-Fridley).

Approved [92-41](#) by the House, the bill awaited action by the Senate Finance Committee when session ended. However, the provision was included in the omnibus economic development finance bill ([HF122](#)).

Among concerns addressed by opponents is that this would require creation of 14 new full-time equivalent positions at the department, and that it does nothing more than add costs to independent contractors.

[Rep. Rob Eastlund](#) (R-Isanti) unsuccessfully tried to amend the bill to remove licensed residential contractors from the requirement, because they already receive department oversight. "There is a lot of abuse in the contracting community, and this is one way we can get at it. It's very regulatory, but at least we can take the legal, licensed contractors out of this and not put one more hoop for them to jump through," he said.

The bill is needed because people are breaking the law by working without insurance, thereby costing every taxpayer money in uncompensated care, said [Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul). "We have done everything in this bill to address the concerns of legitimate contractors that hire legitimate people and pay the correct bill, whether it's unemployment insurance or worker's compensation insurance. ... It'll save more than it expends by having people have insurance."

— M. COOK

ENVIRONMENT

Dedicated funding in limbo

After waiting for nearly a decade, supporters of a constitutional amendment to dedicate funding for the environment and the arts will have to wait some more.

A proposal to raise the state's sales tax by three-eighths of 1 percent and dedicate the funding to fish and wildlife habitat, clean water and cultural heritage made it as far as a conference committee this year — as it did the previous year — but fizzled when legislators simply ran out of time.

The House bill ([HF2285](#)), sponsored by [House Majority Leader Tony Sertich](#) (DFL-Chisholm), called for divvying up the revenue, projected at more than \$290 million a year, as follows:

- 25 percent for fish and wildlife habitat;
- 25 percent for clean water;
- 15 percent for parks and trails;
- 15 percent for drinking water protection;
- 10 percent for arts and cultural heritage; and
- 10 percent for the Legislature to appropriate at its discretion for the purposes listed above.

The Senate version ([SF6](#)), sponsored by [Senate Majority Leader Larry Pogemiller](#) (DFL-Mpls), would have appropriated the money differently, with:

- 43 percent for clean water and parks and trails;
- 33 percent for fish and wildlife habitat, land and forest resources; and
- 24 percent for arts and cultural resources.

Both bills made rapid progress through their respective legislative bodies during the final weeks of session. A conference committee convened the last day of session to work out a compromise between the two bills, but time ran out as legislators were forced to instead take action on several of the session's major budget bills before the 12 a.m. adjournment deadline. Conferees disagreed over how best



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

House Majority Leader Tony Sertich, left, confers with Senate Majority Leader Larry Pogemiller during a May 21 meeting of the Dedicated Funding Conference Committee.

to allocate the money, and also quibbled over the precise wording of the question that would have to be submitted to voters for approval on the 2008 ballot.

Both bills have the potential to be brought up for consideration again in the 2008 legislative session; however, many advocates were hoping the measure would pass this year so that they could have ample time to raise funds to help drum up public support for the proposal.

Opponents of dedicated funding argue that it amounts to “budgeting through the constitution,” and that it ties the hands of future Legislatures that may want to use the money for other purposes. Some lawmakers also oppose funding the measure with a sales tax increase, arguing that a portion of the existing tax should be dedicated instead.

— N. BUSSE

Fridley), the bill would have increased the fee up to 5 percent of the \$100 fee paid every five years by notaries for their license to perform the service. Currently, notaries can charge up to \$1. The last change in the fee occurred in 1983, when the maximum charge was increased from 25 cents to \$1.

Pawlenty, in his [veto message](#), wrote that the increase was too much.

“I would support a more reasonable fee increase, but a 500 percent increase is too large,” he wrote. “It could adversely impact businesses and individuals who require notarization of documents.”

Supporters said the increase would have helped offset the increase to the notary-licensing fee made several years ago.

[HF144/SF463*/CH127](#)

— S. HARDING

Chisholm) and [Sen. Don Betzold](#) (DFL-Fridley), the bill would have created a 14-member board to craft an insurance pool that would have mandated participation from the approximately 200,000 school employees statewide.

“Creating the statewide mandatory insurance pool by this bill does not address the real factors that are driving school districts’ health-care costs upward,” Pawlenty wrote in his [veto message](#). “As a result, little if any savings are expected from this bill.”

The governor also objected to the logistical uncertainties previously posed by bill opponents, including the composition of the governing board, the absence of detailed reserve requirements and the negative impact the pool could have on school districts who’ve kept insurance costs down.

“In short, this bill leaves too many issues unresolved,” he wrote.

[HF464*/SF276/CH142](#)

— M. SIMPSON

GOVERNMENT

No notary fee increase

**Vetoed
by
the
governor**

A bill that would have raised fees charged by notaries was vetoed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty.

Sponsored by [Rep. Melissa Hortman](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and [Sen. Don Betzold](#) (DFL-

INSURANCE

No school insurance pool

**Vetoed
by
the
governor**

Gov. Tim Pawlenty vetoed a bill that would have established a mandatory health insurance pool for all school employees.

Sponsored by [House Majority Leader Tony Sertich](#) (DFL-

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2007 New Laws

A complete review of all new laws passed this year is expected to be available after July 1 at the New Laws 2007 Web page, <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/NewLaws/NewLawsmain.asp>. To receive an electronic notification when the New Laws have been posted, go to www.house.mn/list/join.asp?listname=houseinformation.

Arranged by category, readers will find user-friendly access to stories that explain, in depth, the new laws. A link is provided to the actual bill text that was passed into law. By typing in a key word, an index will help readers find under which category the new law being searched for is located.

Because this is the first year of the biennium, bills that were introduced but not acted upon could see new life in the second year of the biennium. Stories on some of the more high-profile bills not making it into law and those that were vetoed will also be featured.

BONDING

Disaster assistance

A western Minnesota city will receive a grant for flood cleanup, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Paul Marquart](#) (DFL-Dilworth) and [Sen. Keith Langseth](#) (DFL-Glyndon), the law will provide Browns Valley with a \$2 million public safety grant to be used for relief from damage caused by a March 2007 flood. The grant is available until June 30, 2009.

The law, effective May 24, 2007, also amends the 2005 and 2006 bonding laws by adding Browns Valley to the list of cities or projects eligible for money from a pool of \$52 million set aside for flood hazard mitigation grants for publicly owned capital improvements to prevent or alleviate flood damage.

[HF2433](#)*/[SF2236](#)/CH122

— S. HEGMAN

CONSUMERS

Restricting lead in jewelry

Effective Sept. 1, 2007, a new law restricts the manufacture and sale of jewelry, including body piercing jewelry, containing lead.

Sponsored by [Rep. Paul Thissen](#) (DFL-Mpls) and [Sen. Linda Higgins](#) (DFL-Mpls), the law uses federal guidelines regarding safe levels of lead content as a basis for restricting the sale of certain kinds of jewelry in the state.

Under the law, it is illegal to manufacture jewelry intended for sale in Minnesota, including body piercing jewelry, which contain unsafe levels of lead as specified by the law. It is also illegal to sell jewelry, including body piercing jewelry, which is advertised as having safe levels of lead unless it meets certain standards established by the law.

Tighter restrictions apply to jewelry intended for children under age 6. The restrictions do

BOARD WATCH



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Members await House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher's announcement of the vote tally on the attempt to override the governor's veto on the omnibus transportation finance bill.

Stay informed over the interim

Session Daily, the online companion to Session Weekly, will be updated during the interim when news from the House warrants. Subscribers to Session Daily receive e-mail alerts whenever a new article is posted. To subscribe to Session Daily, log on to <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/list/join.asp?listname=sessiondaily> or call (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550. For information on House meetings scheduled during the interim, go to www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/hinfosched.asp. To subscribe to the house schedule electronic mailing list go to www.house.leg.state.mn.us/list/join.asp?listname=houseschedule.

not apply to sales or free distribution of jewelry by a nonprofit organization. The law also spells out testing methods for determining compliance with the restrictions.

Thissen said the legislation originated with several incidents involving children swallowing jewelry containing lead.

[HF1656/SF1262](#)*/CH132

— N. BUSSE

Car buyer protection

A new law aims to help purchasers of vehicles know what they are buying.

Sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park) and [Sen. Ron Latz](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park), the Car Buyer's Bill of Rights will provide better information and protection to purchasers.

The law, effective Jan. 1, 2008, requires dealers to inform customers how much each add-on will cost, and how it will affect monthly loan repayments. This includes a motor vehicle services contract, theft deterrent device, and surface protection products, such as rustproofing, undercoating, fabric stain inhibitor and paint sealant or protectant.

The law will require dealers to provide installment payment information with and without certain option packages, and a buyer would have to provide a signature confirming they received such information.

The dealer must also disclose if it used a consumer credit report, and provide a toll-free number for the consumer to obtain a copy of the report.

Further, the law statutorily creates a definition for "certified" motor vehicle to

eliminate improper use of the term.

The law says that a vehicle cannot be termed certified if, for example, a dealer knows the odometer does not indicate actual miles; if the vehicle has been in a flood or incident; if its title is notated "damaged," "junk," "lemon law buyback," "rebuilt" or "salvage;" or if the dealer fails to provide a completed inspection report to the buyer prior to the sale. Simon said most dealers are using the term properly, and that the law is supported by the Minnesota Auto Dealers Association.

[HF1675/SF1333](#)*/CH99

— M. COOK

Full-value gift cards

A new law will eliminate expiration dates on many gift cards.

Sponsored by [Rep. Joe Atkins](#) (DFL-Inver Grove Heights) and [Sen. Katie Sieben](#) (DFL-Newport), the law will make it unlawful for a business to sell a gift card that has an expiration date or a service fee of any kind, including for nonuse. Supporters said the law is needed because some card expiration dates are so short, and inactivity fees can make a gift card worthless in a matter of months.

BOARD WATCH II

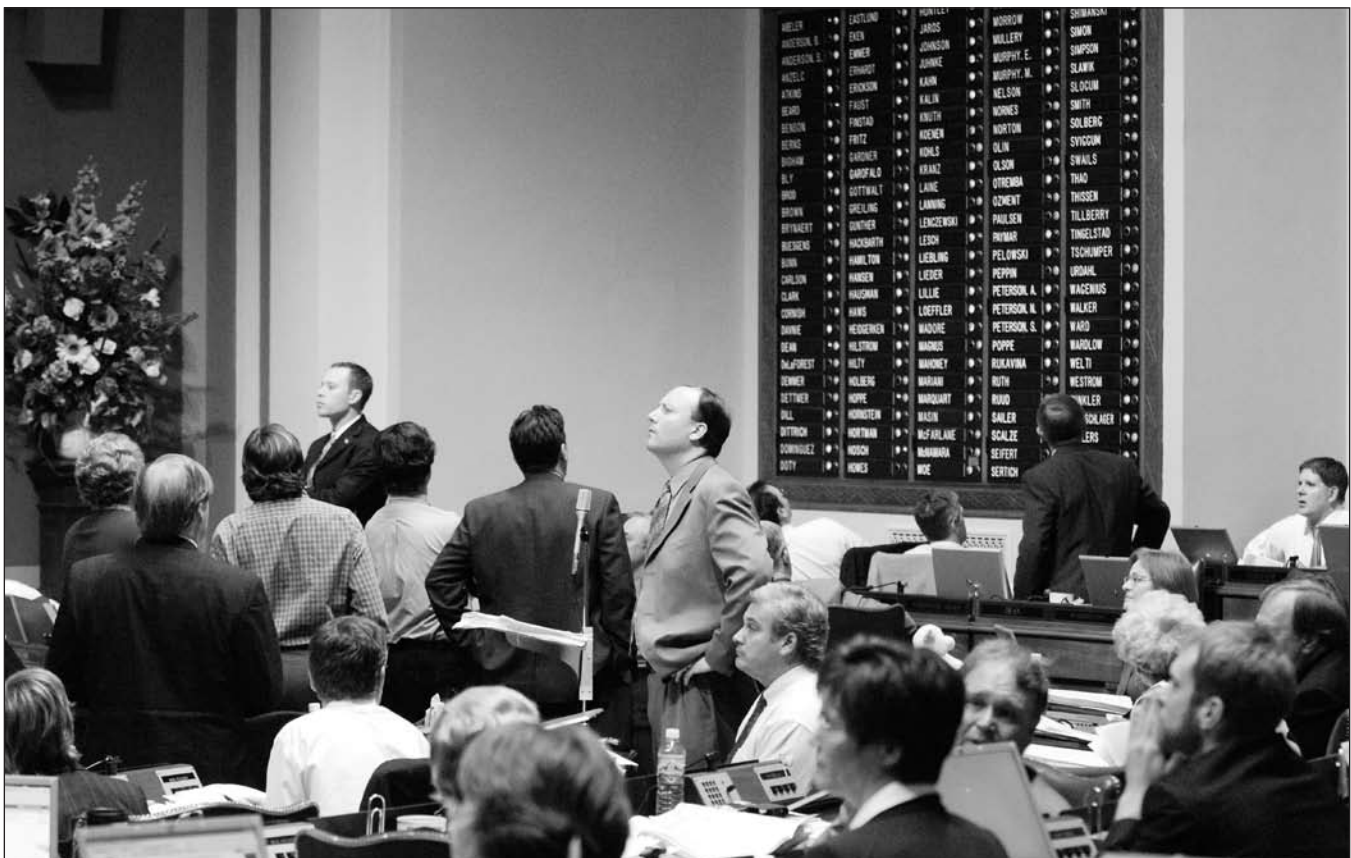


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Members nervously watch the voting board as the House unsuccessfully attempts to override the governor's veto of an omnibus transportation finance bill in the closing hour of the 2007 session.

The law applies to gift cards sold on or after the Aug. 1, 2007, effective date.

Exempted under the law are:

- those distributed for loyalty or promotional reasons without money given in exchange;
- cards distributed for employee recognition;
- cards sold below face value to employers or nonprofit organizations for fundraisers;
- prepaid calling cards;
- debit cards used to access a debit account; and
- cards that can be used at multiple sellers or goods and services, such as a mall card, provided any expiration date and associated fees are disclosed. These are typically bank-issued cards subject to federal regulations.

[HF512/SF69*](#)/CH93

— M. Cook

Credit, debit card protection

A new law is designed to offer protection to credit and debit card users' information.

Sponsored by [Rep. Jim Davnie](#) (DFL-Mpls) and [Sen. Mary Olson](#) (DFL-Bemidji), the

law prohibits a business that accepts a credit or similar card for purchase from retaining an access code that permits use of the credit card more than 48 hours after transaction authorization. This can include a PIN verification code number, the three-digit number on the back of a credit card or the contents of a magnetic stripe. This is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

"This simply puts into law what already is the fact for retailers in the agreement they have already signed with Visa," Davnie said. "In that agreement they are responsible for the security of your data from your credit or debit card when it's in their immediate possession or when they transfer that data to a third-party processor."

A business that fails to abide by the law would be liable to a financial institution for costs resulting from a security breach and for the cost of any reasonable action it takes to protect itself or its customers, such as card cancellation, account closure or refund to the cardholder to cover the cost of any unauthorized transactions. This section is

effective Aug. 1, 2008, to allow retailers time to get educated on the new law, and install the proper safeguards to protect consumer credit and debit card data.

Bill Raker, president of US Federal Credit Union in Burnsville, told a House committee that one breach by the parent company of T.J. Maxx cost the financial institution \$22,700, not to mention customer fear that their data was being used illegally. More than 4,500 cards had to be replaced, sometimes taking up to two weeks. Card companies prohibit a financial institution from telling its members where the breach occurred.

[HF1758*/SF1574/CH108](#)

— M. Cook

Parental consent for piercings

A new law will require anyone under age 18 to have parental or legal guardian consent before having any body part pierced, excluding an earlobe.

Those providing piercing services must also witness the parent or legal guardian signing and dating the consent notice.

CENTER OF ATTENTION



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher meets with press in the Rotunda late on the last day of session, May 21.

Those providing piercing services found in violation of the new law will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Sponsored by [Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba](#) (DFL-Long Prairie) and [Sen. Rick Olseen](#) (DFL-Harris), the law is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

Body piercing is defined in statute as “the perforation of any human body part other than an earlobe for the purpose of inserting jewelry or other decoration or for some other nonmedical purpose.”

Otremba said current state law requires parental consent for tanning and tattoos, but not piercing. The issue came from a parent who was shocked there were no laws regarding the issue, she said.

[HF1013/SF112*/CH98](#)

— P. OSTBERG

CRIME

Gangs are a nuisance

Beginning Aug. 1, 2007, law enforcement officials will have a new tool to help rein in gang activity.

Sponsored by [Rep. John Lesch](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Sen. Mee Moua](#) (DFL-St. Paul), a new law classifies gang activity as a public nuisance, and allows a county or city attorney, or the attorney general, to seek an injunction against any person or group for the habitual use of a place for these activities.

Violators will be subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and up to 30 days in jail.

The original House language placed additional responsibility on the owner of the place where gang members gathered. However, because of the possibility that landlords would be unfairly included in civil suits, a provision was added exempting property owners from liability if they can prove to have made reasonable efforts to stop the activities.

[HF49/SF493*/CH150](#)

— C. GREEN

Do not disturb

Anyone who intentionally destroys, mutilates or injures human burial sites or human burial grounds will be guilty of a felony, under a new law. A person will also be guilty of a felony if they disturb human burial grounds or remove human remains without consent of the appropriate authority.

Sponsored by [Rep. Bill Hilty](#) (DFL-Finlayson) and [Sen. Jim Vickerman](#) (DFL-Tracy), the new law clarifies how to deal with remains found outside of recorded cemeteries.

State Archaeologist Scott Anfinson said there are around 12,500 known burial mounds

E-12 DEBATE

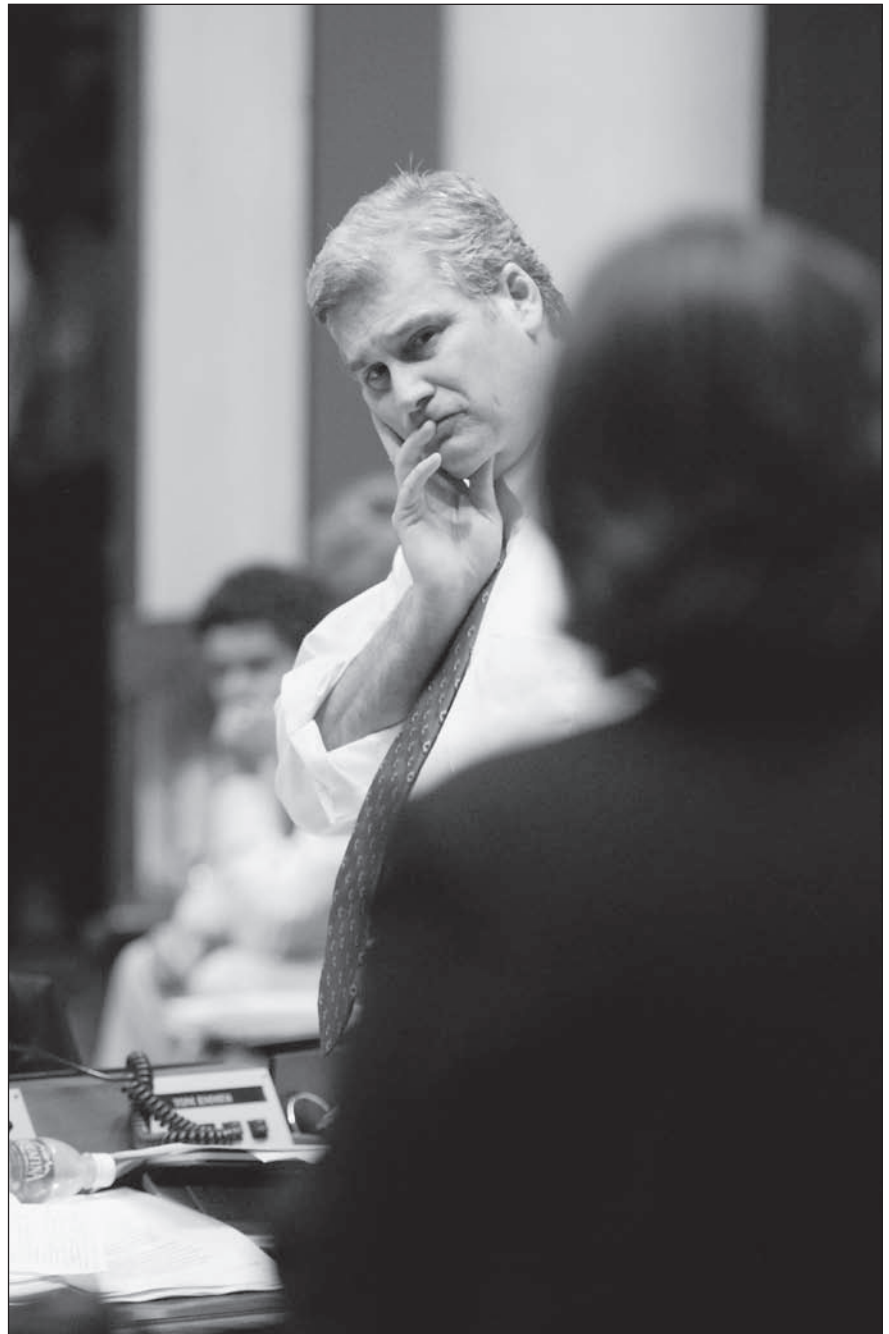


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Rep. Tom Emmer listens as Rep. Nora Slawik explains the early childhood portion of the revised omnibus E-12 education finance bill during the May 21 debate.

and more than 6,000 known cemeteries in the state.

A person who, without the consent of the appropriate authority and the landowner, intentionally, willfully and knowingly does the following is guilty of a gross misdemeanor:

- removes any tombstone, monument or structure placed in any public or private cemetery or authenticated human burial ground;
- removes any fence, railing or other work

erected for protection or ornament within the limits of a public or private cemetery or authenticated human burial ground; or

- discharges any firearm upon or over the grounds of any public or private cemetery or authenticated burial ground.

The law takes effect Aug.1, 2007.

[HF1710/SF2226*/CH115](#)

— S. HARDING

EMPLOYMENT

Payroll card payments

A sunset of a law that permits employers to pay employees through a payroll debit-type card will be extended for one year.

When passed in 2005, the law contained a May 31, 2007, expiration date. A new law extends the expiration date to May 31, 2008.

The law, effective May 19, 2007, is sponsored by [Rep. Joe Atkins](#) (DFL-Inver Grove Heights) and [Sen. Dan Sparks](#) (DFL-Austin).

Atkins said both employees and employers would like to continue the program, but there are some “modest changes” they’d like to make. He expects a bill on those changes to be before the Legislature next session.

In 2005, supporters said that an estimated 13 percent of Minnesota workers did not have a bank account and often used check-cashing stores that charged an average of 2.5 percent to cash checks. The cards, akin to a debit card, would eliminate the need for check cashing.

[HF1554/SF1495](#)*/CH87

— M. Cook

Viewing personnel records

A new law aims to ensure that employees know they can review their personnel file.

Sponsored by [Rep. Mary Liz Holberg](#) (R-Lakeville) and [Sen. Tom Neuville](#) (R-Northfield), the law requires employers with more than 20 employees to provide written notice to a newly hired employee concerning the rights and remedies regarding their employment record.

The law, effective Jan. 1, 2008, also requires employers to provide this information upon termination of employment.

As defined in [statute](#), a personnel file “to the extent maintained by an employer, means: any application for employment; wage or salary history; notices of commendation, warning, discipline, or termination; authorization for a deduction or withholding of pay; fringe benefit information; leave records; and employment history with the employer, including salary and compensation history, job titles, dates of promotions, transfers, and other changes, attendance records, performance evaluations, and retirement record.”

The law comes two years after legislative changes were made to statutes allowing for greater disclosure of employee information by an employer.

[HF287/SF221](#)*/CH119

— M. Cook

Unemployment provision changes

A new law makes a variety of changes to unemployment law.

While many of the changes are technical in nature, the law does provide an additional 13 weeks of benefits for workers laid off from the Ainsworth Lumber Company in Bemidji, Cook and Grand Rapids. To qualify, a worker must meet five eligibility conditions, including enrollment or recent completion of reemployment assistance training.

The law also includes up to 26 weeks of benefits for former Northwest Airlines mechanics who went on strike in August 2005 and were eligible to establish an unemployment benefit account with the [Department of Employment and Economic Development](#), but did not file a continued benefit request within the required time periods. This section is effective July 1, 2007.

The law does not include a 26-week benefit extension, as the House initially sought.

“This means so much to the people that have been treated with such disregard and contempt along the way,” said [Rep. Sandra Masin](#) (DFL-Eagan).

[Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul) found it ironic that the airline gave almost \$100 million in benefits to its top five executives, yet mechanics are losing their homes. “Something is wrong with the greed of corporate America today.”

[Rep. Kurt Zellers](#) (R-Maple Grove) expressed concern that the law hurts people who made concessions with the airline and returned to work. “In a way, you’re setting up a system of winners and losers here. My concern is for those folks who did make concessions, who worked through some of these difficulties who weren’t made whole are now going to be left out.”

Sponsored by Mahoney and [Sen. Dan Sparks](#) (DFL-Austin), the law also:

- increases the penalty assessed on applicants receiving overpayments due to fraud from 25 percent of the amount fraudulently obtained to 40 percent;
- shortens from 30 days to 20 days the period of time an applicant has to challenge their benefit eligibility;
- ensures there is no deduction from an applicant’s weekly benefit amount for Social Security disability benefits in certain instances; and
- changes the part-time earnings deductibility for a worker receiving benefits from 100 percent to 55 percent. This is expected to have a positive impact on about 20,000 people.

[HF648/SF167](#)*/CH128

— M. Cook

ENERGY

Next Generation Energy Act

A new law enacts a package of aggressive energy reforms known as the Next Generation Energy Act of 2007.

Sponsored by [Rep. Bill Hilty](#) (DFL-Finlayson) and [Sen. Yvonne Prettner Solon](#) (DFL-Duluth), the law represents the bulk of the governor’s “Next Generation Energy Initiative,” which aims to bolster investments in renewable power, increase energy conservation and decrease Minnesota’s contribution to global warming.

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, the law calls for cutting the state’s greenhouse gas emissions to below their 2005 base levels — 15 percent by 2015, 30 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2050. This comes from a bill ([HF375/SF192](#)) sponsored by [Rep. Maria Ruud](#) (DFL-Minnetonka) and [Sen. Ellen Anderson](#) (DFL-St. Paul). Ruud said that such a measure is necessary to help prevent a climate change catastrophe.

“We know that if we don’t do that, what the science says is that we will reach a tipping point,” Ruud said.

The law requires several state agencies to work together to come up with a “climate change action plan” by Feb. 1, 2008. Numerous factors, including the potential cost of such a plan to consumers, must be taken into account when developing the plan.

In addition, the law prohibits the construction of any power plants that would produce a net increase in carbon emissions after Aug. 1, 2009.

The conservation portion of the law, which takes effect July 1, 2007, aims to save Minnesotans money while reducing the environmental impacts of energy consumption. This comes from a bill ([HF1221/SF997](#)*) sponsored by [Rep. Jeremy Kalin](#) (DFL-Lindstrom) and [Sen. D. Scott Dibble](#) (DFL-Mpls).

Kalin said the law contains a five-part conservation and efficiency strategy:

- establishing a statewide energy conservation goal of 1.5 percent of annual retail electric and gas sales;
- expanding and improving the state’s conservation improvement program;
- providing research and development and technical assistance to utility companies through the Department of Commerce;
- increasing energy efficiency in state buildings; and
- removing financial disincentives for utility companies to promote energy conservation.

The law also overhauls the state’s

COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

As time moved closer to adjournment May 21, House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher, left and House Minority Leader Marty Seifert continued to try and communicate to get to the major bills. Chief Clerk Al Mathiowetz, center, continued to file paperwork.

Community-Based Energy Development statutes by expanding the types of projects that qualify for the program, increasing the financial benefits for communities that invest in renewable power and encouraging utilities to make use of C-BED projects in meeting the state's renewable energy standard.

The C-BED provisions, which come from a bill ([HF2253/SF2084](#)), sponsored by [Rep. Aaron Peterson](#) (DFL-Appleton) and [Sen. Gary Kubly](#) (DFL-Granite Falls), also require utilities to offer their customers the option of purchasing some or all of their energy from C-BED projects.

"You'll have the opportunity to purchase 100 percent Minnesota renewable energy," Peterson said, adding that the program will feature its own logo similar to the "Minnesota Grown" logo for locally produced foods.

Most of the C-BED provisions take effect July 1, 2007.

Also included in the law is a study on the potential costs and benefits of constructing a new nuclear power plant in the state, with a

report on the findings due to the Legislature by March 1, 2008.

[HF436/SF145](#)*/CH136

— N. BUSSE

Heating and cooling state buildings

A new law will require the commissioner of the [Department of Administration](#) to study geothermal and solar thermal applications for use in heating and cooling of state buildings. The law is effective July 1, 2007.

Sponsored by [Rep. Aaron Peterson](#) (DFL-Appleton) and [Sen. Gary Kubly](#) (DFL-Granite Falls), the law requires all building projects subject to a predesign review or that receive state funding to consider installation of the systems when practical.

Solar thermal is defined as "a flat plate or evacuated tube with a fixed orientation that collects the sun's radiant energy and transfers it to a storage medium for distribution as energy for heating and cooling."

"We're just missing an opportunity to have state buildings use less energy and invest in

renewable energy," Peterson said. By requiring system considerations in the predesign there is greater chance of incorporating the systems into state developments, he said. Plus, he noted, several manufacturers of the systems are located in Minnesota.

[HF1034/SF538](#)*/CH77

— P. OSTBERG

ENVIRONMENT

Mercury products restricted

A new law restricts the sale, use and disposal of certain products containing mercury.

Sponsored by [Rep. Melissa Hortman](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and [Sen. John Marty](#) (DFL-Roseville), the law, most of which takes effect Aug. 1, 2007, would place a number of restrictions on products containing mercury, including:

- requiring that fluorescent light bulbs be recycled;
- requiring motor vehicle electric switches,

fluorescent or high-intensity discharge lamps, laboratory chemicals, reagents, fixatives and electrodes to be clearly labeled by retailers if they contain mercury;

- banning the sale of certain medical devices, mercury switches and miscellaneous products containing mercury; and
- banning the purchase, storage or use of elemental mercury and mercury-containing instruments in schools.

Effective July 1, 2008, retailers who sell fluorescent light bulbs will be required to display signs that read: "Fluorescent bulbs save energy and reduce environmental pollution. Note: Fluorescent bulbs contain a small amount of mercury and must be recycled at the end of their use. Contact your county or utility for recycling options."

During testimony heard in committee, Hortman said that fluorescent lamps and light bulbs alone are estimated to contribute as much as 173 pounds per year of mercury pollution in Minnesota's environment.

[HF1316/SF1085](#)*/CH109

— N. BUSSE

Renewable energy strategy

Effective May 22, 2007, a new law requires the state to develop a strategy to obtain the "maximum economic benefit" from the renewable energy standard.

Sponsored by [Rep. David Bly](#) (DFL-Northfield) and [Sen. John Doll](#) (DFL-Burnsville), the law requires the [Department of Employment and Economic Development](#), in consultation with the [Agriculture](#) and [Commerce](#) departments and the [Public Utilities Commission](#), to come up with a plan and report to the Legislature by Nov. 15, 2007.

According to the law, the report must take into account "consideration of both short-term and long-term opportunities for economic benefit" in achieving the state's newly adopted standard of using 25 percent of its power from renewable sources by 2025.

[HF660/SF563](#)*/CH107

— N. BUSSE

FAMILY

Revisions to child support laws

When the Family Law Child Support Act was passed in 2005, many of its provisions were to take effect in 2007. A new law makes minor technical adjustments, with two substantive changes.

Currently, child support payments are subject to an additional 2 percent above the current interest rate placed on any other monetary judgment in Minnesota. The new law removes the increase, which will hopefully

be an incentive for parents to stay current with child support payments, said [Rep. Steve Smith](#) (R-Mound), who sponsors the law together with [Sen. Thomas Neuville](#) (R-Northfield).

With various effective dates, the law also states that a deviation in the amount of child support is permissible if the child has resided in a foreign country for more than one year, and that country has a substantially higher or lower cost of living.

[HF1500/SF1271](#)*/CH118

— C. GREEN

Commission on guardians

A new law, sponsored by [Rep. Shelley Madore](#) (DFL-Apple Valley) and [Sen. Mary Olson](#) (DFL-Bemidji), calls for a study group to make legislative recommendations concerning conservatorship and guardianship.

The study group is to make recommendations to the Legislature by March 15, 2008, about the rights of wards and protected persons, the powers and duties of conservators and guardians, the complaint process and training and financial auditing.

The study group must include, but is not limited to, representatives from probate divisions of the district courts in the metropolitan area and Greater Minnesota, county adult protection services, the Minnesota Bar Association, Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Guardianship Association.

[Rep. Mark Buesgens](#) (R-Jordan) questioned the timing of the study. "This report isn't coming until March and it would be far too late for the Legislature to utilize it in a meaningful way. It's just going to waste a lot of people's time."

[HF1396/SF795](#)/CH126

— S. HARDING

GAMBLING

Gambling law changes

A new law modifies gambling definitions and clarifies game requirements and prizes.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tom Anzelc](#) (DFL-Balsam Township) and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), the new law:

- allows fraternal organizations to use gambling proceeds to pay taxes on leased facilities and certain utilities;
- allows linked bingo game prizes, not to exceed \$200, to be carried over from one occasion to another in a progressive linked bingo game;
- allows for \$5 pull tabs and tip boards; and
- requires the gambling board to not deny approval of games solely because they are similar to the name or image of a licensed commercial product.

The law has various effective dates.

The provisions relating to linked bingo are "necessary to improve the popularity of this form of gambling," Anzelc said.

[HF1691/SF1966](#)*/CH145

— P. OSTBERG

GAME & FISH

Game, fish, parks and more

A new law makes changes to a variety of state laws regarding hunting, fishing, parks and trails and other environmental issues.

Sponsored by [Rep. David Dill](#) (DFL-Crane Lake) and [Sen. Tom Bakk](#) (DFL-Cook), the law includes the language of what was originally the omnibus game and fish bill, a state lands acquisitions bill and others. It takes effect Aug. 1, 2007, unless otherwise noted.

Some of the changes include:

- banning the use of night vision goggles while hunting;
- repealing a prohibition on the use of smokeless gunpowder during the state's muzzle-loader hunting season;
- requiring anglers who catch any of three different invasive Asian carp species to report it to the [Department of Natural Resources](#);
- allowing crossbow hunting during the regular deer firearms season for any hunter with a valid firearms license;
- allowing the use of remote-controlled animal noise callers for hunting crows and any fur-bearing or unprotected animal species;
- creating an apprentice hunter validation that would allow individuals age 12 or older who lack a firearms safety certificate to hunt small game and deer, for a period of one year, if accompanied by an adult with a valid hunting license;
- directing the DNR to develop a program to encourage private landowners to make their land available for public hunting and fishing use;
- eliminating the reciprocal nonresident deer archery license fee and lowering nonresident deer hunting fees for individuals between 12 and 18 years of age;
- setting new restrictions on baiting deer;
- lowering the minimum draw weight for bows used for hunting;
- eliminating a ban on transporting raccoon, beaver and rabbit meat out of state; and
- effective May 26, 2007, exempting military personnel and veterans from the range and shooting exercise portion of the state's firearm safety certification requirements.

The state lands provisions included in the law allow for the addition, deletion, sale, conveyance or other transfer of certain lands

in Aitkin, Beltrami, Brown, Cass, Cook, Crow Wing, Dakota, Hennepin, Kittson, Lake, Nicollet, Red Lake, St. Louis, Washington and Winona counties.

[Explore Minnesota Tourism](#) is required to develop a “Minnesota Travel Green” program to recognize tourism businesses that have made a commitment “to reduce their environmental impact.”

Beginning July 1, 2010, the law bans the sale of household dishwasher detergents containing more than 0.5 percent phosphorous. This comes from [HF1382/SF1109](#), sponsored by [Rep. Paul Thissen](#) (DFL-Mpls) and [Sen. Tom Saxhaug](#) (DFL-Grand Rapids).

Effective May 26, 2007, the law exempts certain motor vehicle racetracks from statutory noise standards. This comes from [HF415/SF311](#), sponsored by [Rep. Jeanne Poppe](#) (DFL-Austin) and [Sen. Dan Sparks](#) (DFL-Austin).

The Uniform Environmental Covenants Act, which comes from [HF1063*/SF1051](#), sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park) and [Sen. Mee Moua](#) (DFL-St. Paul), is also included in the law.

[HF1021/SF1131*/CH131](#)

— N. BUSSE

GOVERNMENT

Financing state government

After a previous veto, the omnibus state government finance proposal received Gov. Tim Pawlenty’s signature with one line-item veto.

The law appropriates \$551.8 million for fiscal years 2008-09 to fund state agencies, \$61.5 million less than the governor’s recommendation.

Sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park) and [Sen. Don Betzold](#) (DFL-Fridley), all provisions are effective July 1, 2007. [Rep. Phyllis Kahn](#) (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the original House bill ([HF953](#)), and was the lead House negotiator as the bill was conferred with the Senate.

The law appropriates \$145.8 million to the Legislature, that includes the House, Senate and Legislative Coordinating Commission. Both the House and Senate are given additional money for one-time technology needs, which Kahn said would be used to update servers and equipment. Legislative offices are directed to “whenever possible, implement information technology systems that are compatible and work seamlessly across the legislature.” Information technology directors of the

departments are to submit a report describing their efforts on collaboration.

Under the new law, the [Office of Enterprise Technology](#) is appropriated \$24.3 million to fund projects such as information technology security, the first phase of an electronic licensing system, small agency technology infrastructure projects, and improving the tracking and reporting of state and federal grants.

The [Department of Administration](#) is to receive \$58.6 million for the state architect, plant management, human resources, state demographer, Land Management Information Center, Environmental Quality Board, state archeologist, Developmental Disabilities Council, public broadcasting and Minnesota Public Radio.

Special projects funded for the department include a real property Web based management system to track state-owned and-leased property, the creation of an Office of Grants Management to standardize the state grant-making management policies, and a targeted group business study on minorities and female-owned businesses through the use of state contracts.

The [Department of Revenue](#) is appropriated \$252.6 million of which a portion is to be used

HOUSE HELPERS



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Jim Davnie takes time during a May 18 House recess to entertain his children, 6-year-old Rose and 4-year-old Eamon.

to implement activities to gain \$42.5 million in additional revenue from individuals and businesses that currently do not pay all taxes owed. A report is due the Legislature by March 1, 2008, and Jan. 15, 2009, on performance indicators including the number of corporations, businesses and individuals noncompliant with the tax system. Money is designated to a health care access fund and an integrated tax software technology package to update the computerized systems that track tax processes.

The governor line-item vetoed \$80,000 for the acquisition of an Indian burial site in Becker County. Pawlenty said in his [veto message](#) that the state purchasing burial site property would set a precedent that would initiate a long-term financial implication.

Other departments and offices appropriated money include offices of the governor, state auditor, attorney general and secretary of state; the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, Department of Finance, Minnesota Gambling Control Board, Minnesota Racing Commission, Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission, Council on Black Minnesotans, Chicano-Latino Affairs Council, Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, Minnesota State Retirement System, Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund, Minneapolis Teachers' Retirement Fund and St. Paul Teachers' Retirement Fund associations.

[HF548*/SF471/CH148](#)

— P. OSTBERG

Pension changes

A new law makes changes to public employee pension benefits and plans.

Sponsored by [Rep. Mary Murphy](#) (DFL-Hermantown) and [Sen. Don Betzold](#) (DFL-Fridley), the law covers a number of areas, including:

- authorization of an optional annuity election for the surviving spouse of a deceased former legislator;
- optional early division of legislators retirement plan allowances upon a divorce;
- expanding the membership of the general state employees and State Patrol retirement plans;
- authorizing investment in the State Board of Investment by the Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund;
- administrative changes and amending portions of statute that govern the Correctional State Employees Retirement Plan of the Minnesota State Retirement System; and
- changes to disability benefits on a number of plans.

The law has various effective dates.

Much of the discussion revolved around the financial status of the St. Paul Teachers' Retirement Fund Association and the Teachers

LEGISLATIVE DIET



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Bruce Anderson comes prepared for a long day in the House Chamber May 19 with a selection of snacks.

Retirement Association. The law allows a temporary post-retirement adjustment mechanism for the St. Paul fund and requires the [Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement](#) to study how the mechanism is working. A report is due to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 2009.

Murphy said the fund currently is "not great, it's not good, but they want it in the future to be better." The change allows one fund to step out and see what happens so other funds can look at similar proposals into the future, she said.

[HF1978/SF430*/CH134](#)

— P. OSTBERG

PUC technical change

A new law effective Aug. 1, 2007, makes a minor technical change to a statute regarding Public Utilities Commission proceedings.

Sponsored by [Rep. Sheldon Johnson](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Sen. Sandy Rummel](#) (DFL-White Bear Lake), the law makes a two-word clarification to a statute regarding communication rules.

Johnson said the bill "corrects an omission in statute."

[HF1549/SF1019*/CH88](#)

— N. BUSSE

PFA technical changes

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, a new law establishes grant caps and makes technical and housekeeping changes to statutes concerning the Public Facilities Authority.

Sponsored by [Rep. Frank Moe](#) (DFL-Bemidji) and [Sen. Dennis Frederickson](#) (R-New Ulm), the law establishes a grant cap of \$3 million per municipality for Clean Water Legacy total maximum daily load studies, and a similar cap of \$500,000 for phosphorus wastewater treatment reduction grants.

The law also clarifies the role and responsibility of the PFA's executive director in reporting to the [Department of Employment and Economic Development](#).

Moesaid the law contained "a lot of technical, cleaning-up housekeeping changes."

The PFA is responsible for the "administration and financial management of three revolving loan funds and other programs to assist local governments and others with the construction of public infrastructure," according to the DEED Web site.

[HF790/SF1186*/CH96](#)

— N. BUSSE

Cooperative purchasing extended

Current law permits the commissioner of administration to enter into a cooperative purchasing agreement with governmental units and nonprofit organizations for goods, services and utilities. A new law extends

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

this permission to charities that solicit state employees for charitable contributions and charitable organizations that are recipients of a state grant or contract.

[Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.](#) (DFL-Winona) and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope) sponsor the law, which takes effect Aug. 1, 2007.

Byron Laher, director of public policy for the Greater Twin Cities United Way, said that not only will the law provide purchasing power for additional charities, it will help the state save money.

[HF1486/SF1755*/CH83](#)

— C. GREEN

Enterprise technology terminology

Terminology changes for the Office of Enterprise Technology are included in a new law.

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, “intertechnologies” will be changed to “enterprise technology” and “voice, data, video” to “information technology.”

Sponsored by [Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.](#) (DFL-Winona) and [Sen. Dan Larson](#) (DFL-Bloomington), the law is, in part, the result of converging technologies.

Jack Ries, project manager with the office, told a House committee that today’s technologies combine video, data and voice; therefore, statute, as it reads now, is outdated.

[HF1688/SF1556*/CH100](#)

— P. OSTBERG

State employee charities campaign

A new law will streamline how state employees contribute to a combined charities campaign.

Sponsored by [Rep. Karla Bigham](#) (DFL-Cottage Grove) and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), the law defines “registered combined charitable organization” for the purpose of their participation in a yearly campaign in which state employees are encouraged to participate in donating to charities. The law requires charities that participate in the campaign to apply to the commissioner of employee relations by March 1 to be eligible for that year.

Under the law, no two funding campaigns that are related organizations may participate at the same time.

The law is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF1957/SF1597*/CH101](#)

— P. OSTBERG

More CAAPB members

A House and a Senate member will be added to the [Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board](#), under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Carlos Mariani](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-

St. Paul), the law will increase to 12 the board’s membership that already includes the lieutenant governor, four gubernatorial appointees, three St. Paul mayoral appointees and two legislators. The board is responsible for preserving the architectural integrity of a 60-block area including the Capitol.

Mariani said additional members would “add political muscle” to make the case for needed investments to preserve the deteriorating Capitol building. “This is an incredible building we have here ... and we are at a critical point in the existence of this structure.”

According to its Web site, the board has four purposes:

- “(1) Preserve and enhance the dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the capitol, the buildings immediately adjacent to it, the capitol grounds, and the capitol area;
- (2) Protect, enhance, and increase the open spaces within the capitol area when deemed necessary and desirable for the improvement of the public enjoyment thereof;
- (3) Develop proper approaches to the capitol area for pedestrian movement, the highway system, and mass transit system so that the area achieves its maximum importance and accessibility; and
- (4) Establish a flexible framework for growth of the capitol buildings which will be in keeping with the spirit of the original design.”

The law takes effect Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF203/SF118*/CH94](#)

— P. OSTBERG

Sudan divestment

A new law requires the state to remove any holdings from accounts that directly benefit companies that are found to contribute to genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Sponsored by [Rep. Karen Clark](#) (DFL-Mpls) and [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), the new law directs the [State Board of Investment](#) to remove direct or indirect holdings from accounts that scrutinized companies are using to source actions contributing to genocide. It would effect somewhere between “\$80 million and \$90 million worth of international equity securities out of a \$15 billion portfolio,” said Howard Bicker, the board’s executive director.

Scrutinized companies include:

- those with business operations that involve contracts with, or provisions of, supplies or services to the government of Sudan, companies the government has direct or indirect equity share, government commissioned consortiums or projects or companies involved in those;

- those where more than 10 percent of the company’s revenues are linked to Sudan, or less than 75 percent of the revenues are linked and involve oil-related activities, mineral extraction activities or power production activities; and
- one that is complicit with genocide or supplies military equipment to Sudan.

The board has 90 days after the Aug. 1, 2007, effective date to make its best efforts to identify all scrutinized companies. The law lays out a procedure in which the board will divest publicly traded securities of scrutinized companies.

The new law will expire if the president or Congress declares that Darfur genocide has been halted for at least 12 months, has removed sanctions on Sudan, declares the Sudan government has honored commitments to cease attacks or has declared the divestments to be interfering with United States foreign policy.

[HF1332/SF1075*/CH117](#)

— P. OSTBERG

State board changes

A new law repeals expired state task forces, boards and advisory groups.

Sponsored by [Rep. Kathy Tingelstad](#) (R-Andover) and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), the law removes from state statute dozens of groups that are no longer active, such as the Building Code Administration Oversight Committee and Listed Metals Advisory Council.

Tingelstad said the law cleans up statutes to reflect the status of groups.

Advisory groups are to expire on June 30, 2009, under the law.

[HF1340/SF1377*/CH133](#)

— P. OSTBERG

Settling claims

Effective May 25, 2007, a new law appropriates \$51,164 from the General Fund to settle claims made against the state by various individuals, mostly prison inmates.

Sponsored by [Rep. Dennis Ozment](#) (R-Rosemount) and [Sen. Ron Latz](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park), the law appropriates \$49,954 to the [Department of Corrections](#) for payment of medical claims of inmates and those participating in sentence-to-service work programs.

Additionally, \$380 is appropriated to the [Department of Public Safety](#) and \$830 to the [Department of Revenue](#) to settle claims from two individuals regarding unnecessarily large driver’s license reinstatement fees and a property tax refund check that was delivered late by the U.S. Post Office, respectively.

Ozment said the law represents the work of the [Joint House-Senate Subcommittee](#)

on Claims, a division of the [Legislative Coordinating Commission](#).
[HF2293*/SF2044/CH137](#)

— N. BUSSE

Open meeting law

If there is a health pandemic or an emergency declared under the Minnesota Emergency Management Act, a new law authorizes meetings covered by the Open Meeting Law to be conducted by telephone or electronic means.

Sponsored by [Rep. Andy Welti](#) (DFL-Plainview) and [Sen. Rick Olseen](#) (DFL-Harris), the law allows for meetings to be conducted in this manner without being in violation of the Open Meeting Law if:

- the presiding officer, chief legal counsel or chief administrative officer determines that meeting in person or by interactive television is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or an emergency declaration under the Emergency Management Act;
- all members of the body can hear one another, all discussion and testimony;
- members of the public at the regular meeting location can hear all discussion, testimony and votes;
- at least one member of the body, chief legal counsel or chief administrative officer is present at the regular meeting location, unless unfeasible due to the pandemic or emergency declaration; and
- all votes are conducted by roll call.

The law takes effect Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF1303/SF1165*/CH110](#)

— S. HARDING

Indian Affairs Council membership

The composition of the [Minnesota Indian Affairs Council](#) will change, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Bill Hilty](#) (DFL-Finlayson) and [Sen. Tony Lourey](#) (DFL-Kerrick), the law will allow certain bands and tribes to have one member designated by elected tribal presidents or chairpersons of their governing body to the council. The designees will be the only voting council members. Currently voting members are the elected tribal leaders of the individual bands and tribes.

The law takes effect Aug. 1, 2007.

According to its Web site, the council “serves as the official liaison of the Indian tribes and the state of Minnesota.” Other designated council members include directors or commissioners of each tribal agency as designated and three House and three Senate members.

The law will make the arrangement of tribal leaders parallel to that of commissioners appointed to the council by the governor,

Hilty said. It will also update references to “Indian community” to “federally recognized tribes in Minnesota and the urban Indian communities.”

[HF1051/SF1048*/CH130](#)

— P. OSTBERG

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Health and human services funding

Biennial spending in state Health and Human Services departments — affecting nursing homes, housing, child care, health care, mental health and public health — in the 2008-09 biennium will reach \$9.7 billion, under a new law sponsored by [Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) and [Sen. Linda Berglin](#) (DFL-Mpls). The figure was a compromise struck between House and Senate leadership,

and is \$50 million more than the governor proposed.

The governor signed the bill with nine line item vetoes aimed mostly at welfare expenditures.

More than 56 percent of ongoing new funding — \$94 million — will be applied to nursing homes, which will see a 2 percent increase in funding in fiscal year 2008 and 2 percent more over a multiyear period of rebasing, a process that shrinks the disparity between rural and urban facilities.

Major portions of spending are also allocated to health care initiatives, a key priority of both parties and the Pawlenty administration:

- \$28 million to remove barriers to coverage by shortening application forms, eliminating some verification requirements and removing the employee subsidized

TAPED OFF



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

Rep. Paul Kohls put tape over his mouth to protest House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher abruptly putting an end to debate to override Gov. Tim Pawlenty's veto of the omnibus transportation finance bill. The override failed 83-50.

insurance (ESI), barrier, which prohibits entrance to MinnesotaCare within 18 months of utilizing employee-subsidized benefits;

- \$21 million for health care outreach that will include incentive programs and grant support for nonprofits and organizations that assist incoming enrollees;
- \$12.6 million to eliminate the limited benefit set established in 2003, and an eligibility increase for MinnesotaCare participants without children, the second at a cost of \$11.5 million; and
- \$5 million in 2009 and \$50 million in the 2010-11 biennium for the Cover all Kids proposal, which was significantly tapered down from original proposals to include application reforms, a children's health program and a two-month medical assistance extension for newly ineligible families.

The law also begins several health care reform efforts, including a study on the Minnesota Health Insurance Exchange proposal, which could consolidate purchase of

private insurance under one entity; the health care transformation task force, which will study how best to achieve universal access to health care in Minnesota; and \$14 million in grants to establish an interoperable, electronic records system in hospitals statewide.

The law also repeals the \$125 Supplemental Security Income penalty, which was revoked from a family's monthly Minnesota Family Investment Program grant if that family also receives federal SSI assistance. The governor vetoed two provisions that altered work requirements for MFIP recipients and one that would have offered car loan and repair funds for participants.

Funding will also go to:

- mental health initiatives, which receive \$34 million;
- counties, which will receive \$32 million to help replenish federal funding for case management;
- child care, including \$5.5 million to reduce child care co-payments;
- homeless prevention, including \$1 million

for the Minnesota Runaway and Homeless Youth Act;

- lead reduction activities under the Department of Health; and
- the Veterans Home Board and more than a dozen other health-related boards.

[HF1078*/SF967/CH147](#)

— M. SIMPSON

Radioactive materials regulations

Gov. Tim Pawlenty signed into law May 18 a multi-pronged bill that modifies fees for possession of radioactive material and ionizing radiation-producing equipment, changes operating requirements for X-ray machines and extends the sunset date for a task force.

Under the law, sponsored by [Rep. Kim Norton](#) (DFL-Rochester) and [Sen. Michelle Fischbach](#) (R-Paynesville), licensees of radioactive material will experience two regulatory changes regarding application renewals: they will no longer pay a fee and their license expiration will be determined by the commissioner of health, instead of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

In addition, facilities using ionizing radiation-producing equipment — medical and non-medical X-ray machines, accelerators and radiation therapy devices — will pay \$66 annually, instead of \$132 biennially, for registration fees.

The law, effective Aug. 1, 2007, also makes a technical change to X-ray operating requirements, and pushes back the expiration date from June 30, 2007, to June 30, 2011 of the Maternal and Child Health Advisory Task Force, which advises the health commissioner on the health care needs of mothers and children.

[HF1582/SF1215*/CH85](#)

— M. SIMPSON

Family planning bill signed

Family planning clinics may pay less for supplies and drugs under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) and [Sen. John Marty](#) (DFL-Roseville), the law will permit family planning clinics to enter into cooperative purchasing agreements with governmental units to obtain pharmaceuticals and supplies more cheaply.

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, the law will also allow registered nurses to dispense oral contraceptives under the supervision of a physician or nurse practitioner to women ages 12 and older, and will ask the health commissioner to propose medical assistance reimbursement rates that would better cover service costs.

[HF298/SF184*/CH139](#)

— M. SIMPSON

LATE NIGHT LISTENERS



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

Reps. Aaron Peterson and Joe Atkins listen to the debate as the last night of session comes to a close.

Anatomical gifts

The Darlene Luther Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act is now law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Maria Ruud](#) (DFL-Minnetonka) and [Sen. Linda Scheid](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park), the law, named after former DFL legislator Darlene Luther, replaces the current [Uniform Anatomical Act](#) and updates statute language.

It allows an anatomical gift of a donor's body or body part to be made during the life of the donor for the purpose of transplantation, therapy, research or for educational uses.

In addition to adults, minors can donate if they are emancipated or if the parent or legal guardian gives permission.

The law states that a person can be a donor by indicating the choice on a driver's license or identification card, in a will, or if a person has a terminal illness or injury and communicates with two adults that they want to be a donor, provided one of the adults is a disinterested witness.

It also contains provisions for revoking donor status.

The law takes effect April 1, 2008.

[HF1074/SF883](#)*/CH120

— S. HARDING

Pharmaceutical regulations

Instead of trashing unused drugs, county jails and juvenile correctional centers will be permitted to return them to pharmacies, under a new law sponsored by [Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) and [Sen. Sharon Erickson Ropes](#) (DFL-Winona).

The law allows medical supplies and unused drugs to be returned only if the medication is secured in locked storage and if facilities have a trained medication technician available around the clock.

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, the law modifies prescription certification requirements, stating that prescriptions must be certified before drugs are dispensed unless already approved by a licensed central service pharmacy. It also clarifies what prescriptions for legend drugs — which federal law stipulates can only be obtained by prescription — are valid.

The law states that prescriptions aren't legitimate if based solely on an online questionnaire, unless pharmacists can establish that the order is based on an adequate patient evaluation.

[HF1984/SF1959](#)*/CH103

— M. SIMPSON

More license regulation

Child care centers and providers, vulnerable adult caregivers and other licensed professionals will be affected by a new law.

Sponsored by [Sen. Yvonne Prettner Solon](#)

SNAPSHOT IN TIME



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

On the last night of session, Rep. Kathy Tingelstad takes a snapshot of the House floor.

(DFL-Duluth) and [Rep. John Lesch](#) (DFL-St. Paul), the law will, among other things:

- consolidate training requirements for child care professionals;
- require safety measures and training to reduce incidents of sudden infant death syndrome;
- allow use of technology to help caregivers of vulnerable adults track clients at night;
- permit counties to charge a background study fee — not exceeding \$500 — to corporate providers of adult and child foster care;
- require all license holders to cooperate with state and local agencies on pandemic flu preparedness; and
- clarify what information is public for applicants denied licensure.

The law takes effect Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF1577/SF1724](#)*/CH112

— M. SIMPSON

Health professionals regulations

A new law sponsored by [Rep. Cy Thao](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Sen. John Marty](#) (DFL-Roseville) makes regulatory changes affecting various health care professionals.

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, unless otherwise noted, it will:

- require that all X-ray operators take a national exam starting Jan. 1, 2008, and restrict what procedures an X-ray operator can perform;
- permit medical students from foreign countries more flexible exam requirements, effective immediately;
- remove expiration dates for the acupuncture, respirator care practitioners, traditional midwifery and the physician assistant advisory councils;
- increase education requirements for audiology practitioners after Aug. 30, 2007;

- change supervisory, licensure, fees and board requirements for physical therapists;
- modify grounds for disciplinary action by health boards and what action may be taken; and
- change licensee requirements for professional clinical counselors, effective immediately, and social workers. Most provisions relating to social workers are effective Aug. 1, 2011.

[HF57/SF26](#)*/CH123

— M. SIMPSON

Mortuary science regulations

A new law provides changes to mortuary statutes.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tina Liebling](#) (DFL-Rochester) and [Sen. Paul Koering](#) (R-Fort Ripley), the law takes effect Aug. 1, 2007. It removes expired and outdated language, adds new requirements, clarifies information and establishes several consumer protections.

Some of the updated statutes and new rules include:

- in certain instances, noncompensated persons with the right to control the body may remove it from the place of death; transport the body; prepare the body for disposition, except embalming; or arrange for final disposition of the body;
- allowance for a licensee, assisted by a non-licensed employee, to be in the licensee's presence, when removing a body from the place of death and the lifting of such body at the funeral establishment; and
- allowance for an unlicensed person to arrange for and direct or supervise a memorial service provided they disclose that information to the person with the authority to make the funeral arrangements.

The new law does not apply to or interfere with the recognized customs or rites of any culture or recognized religion in the ceremonial washing, dressing and casketing of the dead, provided they are in compliance with existing statutes.

[HF1072/SF802](#)*/CH114

— S. HARDING

Well contractor licensure changes

Two technical changes to state statute will affect well contractors beginning Aug. 1, 2007.

Sponsored by [Rep. Steve Gottwalt](#) (R-St. Cloud) and [Sen. Paul Koering](#) (R-Fort Ripley), the new law increases the corporate assurance bond submitted by an applicant for a well contractor's license from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

"We haven't increased the amount in 16 years, and we have put consumers at risk as result of that," Gottwalt said. He said this law will better protect consumers from improperly dug wells from "fly-by-night" contractors.

Additionally, the total fee for three or more limited well-boring contractor licenses is \$225; now the fee is \$75 each.

"This will streamline well contractor regulations by capping the total fee. Several contractors are paying much more than that, and that is unfair to them," Gottwalt said.

[HF1409](#)*/[SF1229](#)/CH124

— S. HARDING

CHECK-OUT TIME



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

House Majority Leader Tony Sertich checks his watch with about 20 minutes to go before the Legislature's constitutional adjournment.

HOUSING

Closing home equity loopholes

Equity stripping, or mortgage foreclosure rescue, is when someone approaches a homeowner facing foreclosure and convinces them to give up the equity in their home.

Typically, the targeted homeowner is told that they can keep the house if they turn over the deed to someone who can help with foreclosure costs. The house would then be sold back to the homeowner, they are told.

Once the exchange is made, the homeowner often discovers that the price to repurchase the house is much higher than expected. Forced to pay unexpected fees and a high rent to stay, most default on the agreement and face eviction.

In 2006, legislation was signed to protect these homeowners. Yet, a loophole allowed for some creative equity strippers to evict the homeowners if they relocated to another property.

A new law, sponsored by [Rep. Joe Mullery](#) (DFL-Mpls) and [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), closes this loophole and provides additional safeguards.

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, the new law also requires a stay of eviction if the homeowners have initiated a suit to keep their house, and it removes a 2009 sunset date for all relevant statutes.

[HF1209/SF1533](#)*/CH106

— C. GREEN

Mortgage privacy

Current and future homeowners will have assurance their private information required for real estate transactions will remain private.

Sponsored by [Rep. Kurt Zellers](#) (R-Maple Grove) and [Sen. Warren Limmer](#) (R-Maple Grove), a new law prohibits consumer reporting agencies or any other business entity from selling or exchanging with a third party information from mortgage loan applications. The law also prohibits the selling of personal information from a mortgage loan application. Most of the law takes effect Aug. 1, 2007.

The law also contains provisions for:

- increasing the dollar amount of the homestead exemption, and provides for inflation adjustments;
- prohibiting real property from being subject to execution under certain conditions;
- modifying limitation provisions relating to homestead property; and
- the right for building contractors to bring action for contribution or indemnity. This provision is retroactive to June 30, 2006.

[HF211/SF241](#)*/CH105

— S. HARDING

Trust fund for trailer parks

Residents living in a manufactured home park who become dislocated may be eligible for moving reimbursement, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Scott Kranz](#) (DFL-Blaine) and [Sen. Michael Jungbauer](#) (R-East Bethel), the law creates the Minnesota manufactured home relocation trust fund, which owners and renters will contribute to annually or upon the sale of a park.

Under the law, park occupants forced to move due to the sale or conversion of the property will be eligible for \$4,000 for a single-wide or \$8,000 for a double-wide home following a municipal hearing to assess moving costs.

Upon a sale, park owners will be obligated to pay 20 percent of the sale price or a base fee per home — whichever is less — into the fund, which will be managed by the [Minnesota Housing Finance Agency](#). Parks that sell for less than \$500,000 will be required to invest a lower percentage of the total value.

[HF1205/SF1196](#)*/CH141

— M. SIMPSON

INDUSTRY

Construction code changes

A new law, sponsored by [Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Sen. Linda Scheid](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park), makes technical and other changes to construction industry codes.

The law:

- asks the [Department of Labor and Industry](#) commissioner to adopt a state fire code and transfers various powers from several state agencies to the department;
- consolidates violation enforcements, including assessments, penalties, subpoena powers, notice timelines and license suspension and revocations; and
- modifies membership composition, per diem rates, duties, sunset dates and other aspects of various boards, including the Construction Code Advisory Council, the Board of Electricity, the Plumbing Board and the Board of High Pressure Piping Systems.

Most provisions take effect July 1, 2007.

[HF1208](#)*/[SF998](#)/CH140

— M. SIMPSON

INSURANCE

Updating insurance laws

A new law updates the state's insurance statutes relating to accelerated benefits, minimum reserve liabilities, illustrations, comprehensive health insurance and other areas.

Sponsored by [Rep. Joe Atkins](#) (DFL-Inver

Grove Heights) and [Sen. Linda Scheid](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park), the law, which has various effective dates, modifies actuarial tables, increases minimum comprehensive health benefits and updates language on a variety of insurance-related subjects.

Atkins said the insurance industry is in unanimous support of the law, as is the [Department of Commerce](#).

During a March 22 committee hearing, Atkins joked that the law might be "the single most boring piece of legislation" he has ever sponsored, adding, "We haven't even been able to pay anybody to come up and testify against this."

[HF1892/SF1581](#)*/CH104

— N. BUSSE

Airplane insurance goes up

Owners of airplanes will have to increase certain insurance policy minimums from \$25,000 to \$100,000, under a new law.

Impetus for the bill came from the family of Toby Pearson. He was involved in a 2003 plane crash in Grand Marais, which took the life of his wife, and left surviving daughters with continuing medical injuries.

Pearson told a House committee that after years of litigation because the aircraft insurance company refused to pay the medical bills, the costs and emotional loss still "far outweigh the insurance minimums," in the new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Sen. Yvonne Prettner Solon](#) (DFL-Duluth), the law changes the minimum coverage to \$100,000 per passenger seat liability both for bodily injury or death and for property damage, and for bodily injury or death to each nonpassenger in any one accident. Also, the minimum per occurrence for bodily injury or death to nonpassengers in any one accident will rise from \$50,000 to \$300,000.

This section is effective Jan. 1, 2009.

A report from representatives of aircraft owners, aircraft pilots, insurance companies that issue aircraft insurance, and other interested parties is due to the Legislature by Nov. 15, 2007.

[HF772/SF608](#)*/CH79

— P. OSTBERG

Collision repair regulation

A physical inspection will be required when a repair is needed on a car damaged in collision cases, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Joe Atkins](#) (DFL-Inver Grove Heights) and [Sen. Linda Scheid](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Park), the law states that insurers in collision cases cannot adjust a damage appraisal of a repair shop when the damage is in dispute without first conducting a physical inspection of the vehicle. Nor can insurers

specify the use of a particular vendor for procurement of parts or other materials needed to repair the vehicle. Insurers are not required to pay more than a reasonable market price for parts of like kind and quality in adjusting a claim, under the law.

Atkins said the impetus for the bill came from “a phenomenon that occurs sometimes with insurance companies and repair shops where there’s some friction about how the repair is going to take place and who’s going to do it and where they’re going to get the parts from.” The change is a result of bringing the insurance companies and repair shops together to figure out how to deal with the issue, he said.

The law is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF1949/SF1542](#)*/CH80

— P. OSTBERG

LAW

Regulating data privacy

A new law puts tighter restrictions on the sale of Social Security numbers by nongovernmental entities and addresses other data practices issues.

Sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park) and [Sen. Mary Olson](#) (DFL-Bemidji), the new law makes adjustments to data practice regulations for the Department of Transportation, the Department of Corrections and the Bureau of Mediation Services. For instance, if someone’s name is incorrectly associated with a criminal history, and this is proven through fingerprint verification, the identifying information must be removed from public history data. Also, law enforcement agencies may include an identifying photograph on a no-contact order.

House provisions not making it into the law include:

- an increase in the penalty for willful violation of the Data Practices Act by public employees;
- permission for parole and probation authorities to access records regarding a weapon permit for a defendant, parolee or probationer; and
- modifications to provisions and requirements for the testing of newborn infants for genetic and heritable diseases.

[HF1360/SF596](#)*/CH129

— C. GREEN

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Appointments for Anoka

A new law will allow the City of Anoka to appoint its housing and redevelopment authority commissioners.

Sponsored by [Rep. Jim Abeler](#) (R-Anoka)

GOP REACTION



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

House Minority Leader Marty Seifert shares his thoughts about the 2007 session with reporters shortly after its conclusion.

and [Sen. Michael Jungbauer](#) (R-East Bethel), the law states that Anoka may provide, in its home rule charter, procedures for appointing the commissioners. It is effective upon local compliance.

[HF2223/SF2043](#)*/CH125

— N. BUSSE

Protecting resorts

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, a new law aims to protect resort owners from local ordinances that might prevent them from maintaining their buildings.

Sponsored by [Rep. Frank Moe](#) (DFL-Bemidji) and [Sen. Dan Skogen](#) (DFL-Hewitt), the law allows resort owners to conduct maintenance on existing structures and replace damaged or destroyed structures as long as their establishments continue to operate as resorts.

The law allows owners to “minimally” expand their building structures when necessary to bring them into compliance with new federal, state or local buildings codes — provided that such expansions do not bring the structures any closer to a shoreline. It also prevents a change in ownership of a resort from being construed by local governments as a conversion to a different use.

Speaking on the House floor May 14, Moe said the law is designed to help out “mom-and-pop” resorts.

[HF849/SF961](#)*/CH92

— N. BUSSE

Merging two library systems

Upon local approval, the Hennepin County Library system and the Minneapolis Public Library system will merge.

A new law, sponsored by [Rep. Lyndon Carlson](#) (DFL-Crystal) and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), directs the Minneapolis system to transfer all property and assets — including buildings, library collections, artwork, equipment and the Minneapolis Central Library parking ramp — to Hennepin County.

The city will remain responsible for any city-issued bonds for capital improvements for the Minneapolis Library system, and will contribute operating funds to the county for 10 years.

Benefits and seniority of all transferred employees will be protected, while Minneapolis employees may continue participating in their current retirement funds.

The merger will increase efficiencies and allow for the reopening of three Minneapolis branches closed because of financial constraints, Carlson said.

[HF1973*/SF1812](#)/CH121

— C. GREEN

County boundary move

About 30 miles west of the Twin Cities, the City of Rockford straddles the Crow River. Most of the city is west of the river and located in Wright County, while a 16 square-block section east of the river is in Hennepin County.

Effective May 22, 2007, the counties may begin the process of changing their boundaries so that the entire corporate limits of Rockford are within Wright County.

One of the reasons for the change is to reduce response time for emergency services for Rockford residents in Hennepin County, said [Rep. Tom Emmer](#) (R-Delano), who sponsors the law with [Sen. Amy Koch](#) (R-Buffalo). According to resident testimony, it is not unusual for those in the much larger Hennepin County to wait up to 20 minutes before county emergency support arrives, while just blocks away, residents of Wright County receive aid in a matter of minutes.

Rockford Mayor Michael Beyer said the change would also reduce redundancies in services provided.

[HF1141/SF837](#)*/CH102

— C. GREEN

Annexation task force extension

In 2006, an advisory task force was established to study and make recommendations on what changes should be made to laws governing municipal boundary adjustments. A new law extends the life of the task force to June 30, 2008.

The law, effective May 22, 2007, and sponsored by [Rep. Mark Olson](#) (R-Big Lake) and [Sen. Betsy Wergin](#) (R-Princeton), also requires the task force to produce a report by Jan. 15, 2008. Any expenses incurred in preparing the report will be divided between the League of Minnesota Cities, the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities and the Minnesota Association of Townships.

The task force will be made up of two House members, two senators, three representatives for cities and their interests and three for the townships. The first meeting must take place no later than Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF267/SF303](#)*/CH90

— C. GREEN

Land dedication fee clarified

Effective Aug. 1, 2007, a new law clarifies state municipal planning and zoning laws allowing cities to accept a fee in lieu of a land dedication for streets, sewers, utilities and parks.

Sponsored by [Rep. Debra Hilstrom](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Center) and [Sen. Betsy Wergin](#) (R-Princeton), the law specifies that the size of the fee be determined by the “average fair market value of the unplatted land ... under the city’s adopted comprehensive plan, to be served by municipal sanitary sewer and water service or community septic and private well.”

Hilstrom said the law came about because the Builders Association of Minnesota

“wanted some uniform standards for how to evaluate what the value of the land was.”

[HF1629/SF1396](#)*/CH116

— N. BUSSE

Hibbing agency assets transfer

A new law allows for the dissolution of the Hibbing Area Redevelopment Agency, and a transfer of its assets and liabilities to the Hibbing Economic Development Authority.

Sponsored by [House Majority Leader Tony Sertich](#) (DFL-Chisholm) and [Sen. David Tomassoni](#) (DFL-Chisholm), the law is effective upon local approval.

According to its Web site, the authority offers development assistance for new and expansion-minded businesses interested in locating in Hibbing. The authority also coordinates a loan program for construction or equipment with the [Department of Employment and Economic Development](#), Iron Range Resources or other area lending institutions, allowing for tremendously flexible terms.

The agency was created by statute in 1961 to support the growth of Hibbing, but today is active in name only, Sertich said.

[HF180/SF54](#)*/CH91

— C. GREEN

Scott County authority renamed

A 2006 report states that because of an expansion of the “urban fringe of the Twin Cities,” Scott County will experience strong population and household growth in the near future. The Metropolitan Council projects that by 2020, Scott County will have approximately 194,000 residents, up from 89,500 in 2000.

Looking toward this future development, the Scott County Housing and Redevelopment Authority has been renamed the Scott County Community Development Agency.

Sponsored by [Rep. Paul Kohls](#) (R-Victoria) and [Sen. Julianne Ortman](#) (R-Chanhassen), the law is effective upon local approval.

[HF1161/SF1045](#)*/CH78

— C. GREEN

Scott County oversees library system

Following the examples of Hennepin and Washington counties, a new law allows the Scott County Board of Commissioners to operate and manage its county library system. Effective upon local approval, the law will place the operations of the library system under the auspices of the board.

The current library board will continue to exist, focusing on the collections of the libraries and managing use of the library rooms, said [Rep. Mike Beard](#) (R-Shakopee),

who sponsors the law with [Sen. Julianne Ortman](#) (R-Chanhassen).

Since the library board only meets once a month, while the county board meets several times a month, and with the recent growth of the county, it only seems prudent that daily operations and financial accountability fall to the county board, Beard said.

Jon Ulrich, chairman of the board of commissioners, said the new law will provide for better oversight and accountability of the library system, and allow the libraries to become more integrated into the culture of the county.

[HF531/SF547](#)*/CH97

— C. GREEN

Maintenance facility to be sold

The future of the Northwest Airlines maintenance facility in Duluth is no longer in doubt, but to whom it will be sold or leased is still in question.

Sponsored by [Rep. Mary Murphy](#) (DFL-Hermantown) and [Sen. Yvonne Prettner Solon](#) (DFL-Duluth), a new law will allow the city to sell or lease the maintenance facility that has not been used since 2005 when Northwest mechanics went on strike and the company filed for bankruptcy.

The law, effective July 1, 2007, also states that the lease or sale is subject to approval of the finance commissioner if there are bonds outstanding for financing the facility. No approval is required if the bond trustee has taken control of the facility as a result of a default.

[HF1175/SF962](#)/CH138

— S. HARDING

Cities can provide wellness programs

One of the best ways to keep medical costs down for any organization is for its employees to stay healthy. Some government entities even provide employees with access to fitness classes, workout equipment and healthy meal options.

Signed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty May 10, a new law adds cities to the local government units that may provide these services. It is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

[Rep. Bev Scalze](#) (DFL-Little Canada), who sponsors the law with [Sen. Tony Lourey](#) (DFL-Kerrick), said that while the law simply adds cities to a current statute that provides this permission for state and county employees, it also permits cities to operate employee recognition services, and provides staff and facilities for preventive health programs.

“Lifestyle changes have a significant impact on the cost of health insurance,” Laurie

Elliott, human resources manager for the City of Shoreview, told a House committee. The program will help cities with health care cost containment and encourage employees to take care of their health, she said.

[HF905/SF1311](#)*/CH59

— C. GREEN

METRO AFFAIRS

Metropolitan Council changes

Cleaning up outdated and erroneous references in the Metropolitan Land Planning Act and streamlining administrative procedures, a Metropolitan Council housekeeping bill is now law.

The regional planning agency serving the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area, the council provides essential services to the region, such as wastewater treatment and public transportation.

Effective May 23, 2007, the new law calls for the creation of a nonprofit organization that will “help acquire or finance the acquisition of lands and other assets for public recreation and open space within the metropolitan area.” The council will contribute \$500,000 from its general fund, and establish an advisory committee and a board of directors to get the foundation started.

Sponsored by [Rep. Debra Hilstrom](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Center) and [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), the law also calls for a one-time transfer of up to \$1 million from the council’s Livable Communities Demonstration Account to assist local communities with comprehensive planning.

Not included is a provision doing away with the [Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government](#), a bipartisan committee that provides council oversight and budget review.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty vetoed [HF881](#) May 3, sponsored by Hilstrom and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), because it called for eliminating the commission.

[HF882/SF1302](#)*/CH113

— C. GREEN

MILITARY

Support Our Troops program

Eligibility requirements for grants made through the Support Our Troops license plates program are expanded, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Larry Haws](#) (DFL-St. Cloud) and [Sen. Tony Lourey](#) (DFL-Kerrick), eligibility is broadened to include military personnel, “like a soldier who is injured and returns home, but did not get to the classification of veteran,” said

Haws. This would currently apply to about 40 individuals.

More than 13,000 [Support Our Troops](#) license plates have been purchased since they became available in 2005.

The Minnesota National Guard manages the account that can grant up to \$2,000 to an eligible Minnesota resident serving in regular active military duty, and any member of a National Guard or Reserve unit based in Minnesota who is serving in any active military service, as well as a member of the service member’s immediate family.

The law is effective Aug. 1, 2007

[HF1157/SF1675](#)*/CH86

— L. SCHUTZ

Consumer contract cancellations

A new law will help military personnel and their families get out of consumer contracts without penalty when they are deployed or if their duty station changes.

Under the law, sponsored by [Rep. Ryan Winkler](#) (DFL-Golden Valley) and [Sen. Sharon Erickson Ropes](#) (DFL-Winona), protection will be offered for rental, club, membership travel or service contracts without penalty. By law, a service contract includes “those for services such as television, computer, Internet service and any other type of service.” It would be applicable to contracts executed by or on behalf of the affected person

that would result in it being impractical for the person to enjoy the contract benefits.

Wireless service contracts will be effective 30 days after the provider receives notice of the service member’s order for activation, deployment or change of utility station.

It also prohibits utilities from disconnecting service if a member of the household has been ordered into active duty or a change of duty station, under certain circumstances.

The law is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF532*/SF409](#)/CH111

— M. COOK

RECREATION

Amusement ride regulations

Amusement ride owners will be required to have annual and daily ride inspections, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tim Faust](#) (DFL-Mora) and [Sen. John Marty](#) (DFL-Roseville), the law is in response to an incident in Faust’s district in which two girls fell out of an amusement ride due to operator error.

Under the changes, amusement rides must be inspected at least once annually by a certified inspector, and before daily operation by the owner or operator of the amusement ride. The certified inspector must be an employee of the insurance company that insures the amusement ride or an independent inspection service provider that the insurance company or owner has contracted.

Also, a ride cannot be operated unless there is an insurance policy with limits of at least \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million aggregate, insuring all owners against liability for injury to a rider.

Further, owners are required to have a documented training policy for the operation of rides, under the law. The ride owner must have a written certification for each person operating the amusement ride. Owners must also maintain a first-aid incident report log resulting from the ride. Any serious injury, defined as a result in death, dismemberment, disfigurement, compound fracture or permanent loss of the use of a body organ, member, function or system that requires hospital admission within 24 hours of the accident, must be investigated by the local law enforcement or the [Department of Labor and Industry](#).

Under the new law, a ride operator or owner may impose and enforce reasonable safety rules regarding the behavior of riders. They will be able to prohibit or remove a rider from a ride if they violate the safety rules.

The law is effective Jan. 1, 2008.

[HF1824/SF1370](#)*/CH95

— P. OSTBERG

RECYCLING CENTER



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

When the representatives left the floor at the conclusion of the 2007 session, House pages recycled the paperwork that accumulated during the 14-hour session.

SAFETY

Air bag replacement

Motor vehicle airbags must be replaced with those specific to the vehicle, under a new law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tom Tillberry](#) (DFL-Fridley) and [Sen. Dan Skogen](#) (DFL-Hewitt), the law requires a person with knowledge

that a motor vehicle's airbag has deployed or is missing may not perform collision repair on that vehicle unless an airbag is replaced with one designed for the make, model and year of the vehicle. Also, a person may not knowingly install or reinstall any object in lieu of an airbag. A person who violates the above terms is guilty of a misdemeanor.

"Repair shops are sometimes replacing

the airbag if they feel like it," Tillberry told a House committee. Also, shops are occasionally replacing the airbag container with items such as pop cans, he said. "Now the Coke can says it's the real thing, but it ain't the real thing for this."

The law is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF1704/SF1464](#)*/CH71

— P. OSTBERG

Gov. EYE VIEW



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Four hours before the Legislature's constitutional deadline for adjournment, Gov. Tim Pawlenty assesses the final hours of the session at a news conference.

Dear Readers:

The Legislature adjourned May 21 and is scheduled to reconvene for the second year of the biennium at noon, Feb. 12, 2008. This special issue of Session Weekly provides a wrap-up of all legislation considered during the final days of session, including Gov. Tim Pawlenty's actions on the major spending bills presented to him after session was completed.

To our readers currently on the Session Weekly mailing list, your free subscription will be rolled over to next year. The first issue of Session Weekly for the 2008 session is scheduled to be published on Feb. 15.

Of course, House activities do not come to a standstill during the interim. And Session Daily, the online companion to

Session Weekly, will be updated during the interim when news from the House warrants. Subscribers to Session Daily receive e-mail alerts whenever a new article is posted. To subscribe to Session Daily, log on to <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/list/join.asp?listname=sessiondaily> or call (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550.

For information on any House or many legislative commission meetings scheduled during the interim, go to www.house.mn/hinfo/hinfosched.asp. To subscribe to the house schedule electronic mailing list go to www.house.mn/list/join.asp?listname=houseschedule.

During the 2005 session, language in the omnibus state government finance law allowed for sponsorships to help underwrite Session Weekly production and mailing costs. We would like to thank those of you who made a voluntary donation this year. Donations are still encouraged and can be made by sending a check, payable to Minnesota House of Representatives, to House Public Information Services, 175 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155. However if you choose not to contribute, you will continue to receive Session Weekly during next year's session.

Session Weekly staff

From soldier to student

College centers provide returning vets and their families a place to connect

By LEE ANN SCHUTZ

For Andy Davis of St. Peter, finishing his degree work at the Twin Cities campus of the University of Minnesota proved at first to be a challenge. It wasn't the rigors of his junior-level course load, nor that he was several years older than most of his counterparts. It was that he had just spent the last five years in places that most students have only heard about, and having experiences that were not related to everyday life on a college campus.

After graduating high school, Davis had joined the Army's elite 3rd Ranger Regiment. By the time he was 25, he was honorably discharged and returning to civilian life after seeing some pretty serious action as part of the initial invasion into Afghanistan and Iraq.

Now as a college student, he felt like he didn't belong. "I felt I had nothing in common with the lives these people were living here," he said.

Returning to civilian life, especially for combat veterans, isn't easy. The Minnesota National Guard recognizes this and holds reintegration academies across the state to help families prepare for their soldiers' return. And statistics show that returning soldiers attending postsecondary schools find it extremely difficult to stay focused on achieving the degree. There is a drop-out rate of approximately 30 percent.

Reasons for this vary, but the intensity of the war experience is a contributing factor. Davis said that when you are in the military, it's like a family — "supportive and people looking out for one another." In fact, he said that many returning vets recognize their time in the military as one of tremendous personal growth.

Setting up a network

As discharged military often do, Davis sought out others who share the military experience. "They provided me with a social network," he said.

This former Boy Scout, Eagle Scout and House candidate found himself, once again, called to active duty, but this time it was to help him and his veteran comrades' transition into the world of higher education.

In 2004, Davis and a fellow student led the charge to establish a nonprofit support organization for veterans at the university. Called Comfort for Courage, the veterans transition center not only serves as a sort of



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Andy Davis stands in the Comfort for Courage veterans transition center at the University of Minnesota. He cofounded the program, which serves as a model for others that are being established across the state.

A new Web site, www.mymilitaryeducation.org, is available to help answer Minnesota veteran's questions about education benefits. Help is also available by calling (800) 456-8519.

safe-haven for student-vets, but also volunteers have shipped tons of comfort items to service personnel stationed overseas. From a small space in the basement of Eddy Hall on the Minneapolis campus, it provides a place for veterans to talk with each other, ask questions and learn how to access benefits for which they are entitled.

A good idea spreads

Don Pfeffer, a counselor at Central Lakes Community College in Brainerd, also saw the veterans' needs. He connected with Davis, and while the mission is similar, the Brainerd office Pfeffer started took a different focus — bringing in the family dynamic. "I'm a Vietnam vet, and now 35 years later I understand the impact it had on my family when I got out of the service."

Pfeffer said the campus is a natural place for veterans and their families to find support and answers to their questions. "It is a nonthreatening environment," he said.

Including the university program, which remains running as a nonprofit, there was a smattering of offices on college campuses growing up from grassroots efforts.

However, the idea caught the attention of state lawmakers. Last year, the Legislature allocated \$600,000 for each of five years to the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) to set up six [regional veterans higher education assistance offices](#). Pfeffer joined the department as the program director.

The legislation calls for each university and Minnesota State College and Universities system campus to provide adequate space for

Soldier continued on page 35

Every body counts

Mapping and preparation for 2010 census has begun

By PATTY OSTBERG

Congressional districts are supposed to be identical in population, “down to the last person, if possible,” according to State Demographer Tom Gillaspy. Although Minnesota’s population continues to increase, it could lose one of its eight seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. The seat loss scenario could arise if Minnesota’s population growth rate is not as high as South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina.

If Minnesota’s population grows, and those other states are a little bit slower, the census reports that Minnesota will retain the seat, Gillaspy said. The decision comes down to less than 2,000 people moving in or out of the states. That is why the 2010 census count is so important.

Every 10 years, the state demographer’s office and the U. S. Census Bureau work together to get the most accurate count of people. The census is paramount to legislative redistricting and drawing congressional lines.

Local government aid, municipal street aid, school district funding for community education and other programs, transportation planning and distribution of federal money all hinge on the results of the census.

Included in the omnibus state government finance law is \$300,000 for census 2010 preparation.

Difficult numbers to gather

Every household in the state should receive a census form around March 2010. Recipients will be left at a crossroads: fill out the bar-coded questionnaire or wait for the census taker to knock at the door. And they will come a knockin’, according to Gillaspy.

This personal appearance can sometimes be

troubling for those at both sides of the door.

Imagine a census-taker walking into a neighborhood of recent Latino immigrant families and saying, “Hi, I’m from the federal government. I’d like to ask you some questions,” Gillaspy said.

Many immigrants move here without knowing the language, and have never experienced a census process. “We want to make sure people understand this is for the census. It’s good for you to answer the questions,” he said.

Part of informing immigrant communities includes creating full-count committees through local minority councils and recruiting religious leaders to explain the importance of the census process. The U. S. Census Bureau also provides questionnaires in a variety of languages and hires translators to help.

Getting accurate numbers in northern Minnesota can also be difficult.

It’s not unheard of for some places to get 1 foot to 2 feet of snow when census takers are recording information. Or if a small population of people live on an island with water still partially frozen over, it can be difficult to get to those areas to take a correct count. Minnesota was one of the last states that had census takers on sled dog teams in

the 50s, Gillaspy noted. Now they work to get a count in those areas beforehand and make sure people send back their forms before they have to send a census taker out, he said.

Other population counts include places where homeless people may live.

On March 31 of the year ending in 0, census takers head out for an evening called “S-Night.” According to Gillaspy, “Census takers literally go out to shelters, railroad yards, under bridge decks and into caves,” that were identified as places where people might be living.


A report from the U.S. Census Bureau from the 2000 S-Night shows the population for those living in emergency and transitional shelters in Minnesota totaled 1.6 percent of the state’s population.

Map and ad preparation

When local government aid for cities and counties depends on population counts, it’s important to have the correct addresses to get the census to every household, Gillaspy said. It’s a lot of “checking and checking and checking. If you can imagine just how many streets and how many addresses there are in Minnesota, it’s a pretty big job.”

One of the first steps in getting that envelope to the door involves the state demographer and the U.S. Census Bureau doing preliminary checks. This summer, local government officials are expected to meet with the demographer’s office to discuss specific review programs, and to look at maps with boundaries and address lists to identify problem areas or groups of addresses that are perhaps not identified.

They will also meet one on one to discuss issues such as annexation. For example, each decade Rochester generally has a number of changes in boundaries that can be complicated and difficult to reflect on a map. “We need to make sure they are done as accurate as possible,” Gillaspy said.

Thousands of workers need to be recruited for periods of time from two months to two years. In 2000, the need for workers was so desperate recruiters stood on street corners with job applications offering them to those in vehicles stopped at red lights. 

Looking to a better future

Economic development law helps job seekers, housing needs

By Mike Cook

Most of a slimmed down law received the governor's blessing.

The omnibus jobs and economic development law now checks in at approximately \$415.98 million, with \$341.5 million in net General Fund money. It is about \$33 million less than [SF2089](#), which was previously vetoed. Technically, [Rep. Tom Rukavina](#) (DFL-Virginia) and [Sen. David Tomassoni](#) (DFL-Chisholm) sponsor the law. However, [Rep. Mary Murphy](#) (DFL-Hermantown) was the lead House negotiator and sponsor of the vetoed bill.

"He has deeded it over to me for a short time as a foster mother," Murphy said.

According to Tomassoni, the total pre-veto package was about a \$93 million increase with a combination of one-time and ongoing money. Pawlenty vetoed almost \$5 million to create the finished product.

Among the changes between the vetoed bill and the law are:

- a nearly \$16.5 million reduction to \$14.9 million for the 21st Century Minerals Fund, an Iron Range business development fund;
- \$500,000 less to \$2 million for Youthbuild programs, which help high-risk youth learn housing construction job skills and complete their high school education;
- a \$550,000 reduction to \$750,000 for the sesquicentennial commission to help prepare for the state's 150th birthday in 2008; and
- elimination of \$250,000 for a nanotechnology development fund program.

The agreement calls for a \$5 million increase in the Minnesota Investment Fund, with \$3 million dedicated for a Thomson West expansion in Eagan; \$400,000 for Rogers tornado relief; and \$350,000 for an increase in statewide redevelopment grants.

Murphy said the new law, most of which takes effect July 1, 2007, will help drive growth and economy throughout the state, while supporting working Minnesotans. "It supports research and development in the biotechnical industry, it improves small

business support services to rural Minnesota, to women, minority, small-business owners and youth. It enhances the marketing of Minnesota tourism, it reinvests in our cultural and historical assets, and it increases the vitality of arts organizations across the state by restoring many cuts that have been made since 2002."

"This is truly a bill that is worthy of signing," said [Rep. Bob Gunther](#) (R-Fairmont).

The law was piggybacked on a bill offered for years by Rukavina, to require all American flags sold in the state be made in the United States. That provision is in the law.

Job training

Included in the law is \$99.86 million in workforce development money, \$66.87 million from the General Fund and the remainder from the Workforce Development Fund, which is revenue collected from a workforce development tax of 0.10 percent on all taxable wages paid by employers.

Among the highlights is the \$2 million for the Youthbuild program. The appropriation may be used to restore three programs that were eliminated due to budget cuts, plus an inflationary increase, and to add seven additional sites to the current 10. It is hoped that the number of students served can increase to 500 per year, compared to 306 in 2006.

According to the its annual report, the program received \$754,000 in state funds in

Vetoed items

- \$2.5 million in debt relief funding for the RiverCentre in St. Paul;
- \$575,000 in one-time funds to the Iron Range Resources for five projects: \$225,000 in infrastructure for an Aitkin County peat project, \$150,000 for the Iron Range Youth In Action program; \$75,000 for B'nai Abraham Synagogue preservation, \$75,000 for infrastructure improvements at a Chisholm baseball field and \$50,000 to a retriever club for pond and field construction;
- \$500,000 to improve the Upper Sioux community water system;
- \$500,000 for the safe patient handling program's second year;
- \$350,000 to reduce community center debt in Inver Grove Heights;
- \$200,000 to HIRED;
- \$150,000 to the Hennepin-Carver Workforce Investment Board;
- \$100,000 for the Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board; and
- \$75,000 for the second year for the Hockey Hall of Fame in Eveleth.

2006 and leveraged more than \$3 million in matching funds. A four-year study indicated the program generated \$7 million for the state from increased tax revenues and reduced corrections spending.

The law also allocates:

- \$18 million for the state's vocational rehabilitation program for people with significant disabilities;
- \$12.5 million for extended employment services for people with disabilities;
- \$3.3 million for employment support to people with mental illness;
- \$2.65 million to fund summer youth employment programs in Minneapolis;
- \$1.2 million to fund summer youth employment programs in St. Paul;
- \$910,000 for training of hard-to-train individuals; and
- \$750,000 for immigrant and refugee programs, including job seeking and workplace orientation.

While supportive of the final product, [Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul) is disappointed employment development programming money had to be removed from the law.

"The reports that have come out on unemployment, for the first time in 30 years,

Development continued on page 35

Seeking something special

A last-second bill could help ease special education shortages

By **STEPHEN HARDING**

A senior at Minneapolis Southwest High School, McKenzie Erickson is the student body president, takes Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes and has testified several times before the Legislature. She also has severe dyslexia, and didn't receive the help she needed until she was already failing the third grade.

"That was several years where I could have been receiving services, and who knows what my potential could be now. I could be a few more years ahead," she said. "If there is more money (for special education), more students would succeed like I have."

A new law, which lays out biennial spending for all of E-12 education, also includes a compromise for special education spending. It is less than what the Senate wanted and more than what the House had originally allocated, but it is an attempt to deal with special education funding problems that have been developing over many years.

Short-changed

In 1975, the federal government enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which mandated that states provide free and appropriate education; however, Minnesota has since received no more than 18 percent of the 40 percent of funding that the federal government pledged to pay for the mandate.

In the current biennium, education gets 40 percent of the state's \$35 billion budget, and special education makes up 7.7 percent of the education budget.

The most recent data from the National Education Association shows that it costs an average of \$7,552 annually to educate a regular student, while special education students cost \$16,921.

Barbara Burke, special services director for White Bear Lake Area Schools, said it also costs more to employ special education teachers,

because their training typically puts them within three credits of a master's degree.

Special education teachers also work longer into the summer, need more prep time and have more paperwork that is required for special education students, she said.

The cross subsidy

School districts receive funding for special education from the state and the federal government. More often than not, the funding received is not enough to cover special education costs, so local school districts are forced to fund special education on their own.

To make up the gap in funding, school districts have to siphon money from other regular school programs to pay for special education. This is known as a "cross subsidy."

Take, for instance, Richfield. With a \$2 million cross subsidy, it has had to cut classes, close buildings and become creative with staffing. Superintendent Barbara Devlin said the district had to close one elementary school and redistribute students to other schools, resulting in the cutting of many support staff positions while raising class sizes in other schools.

Also, the option for students to register for seven classes in high school has been eliminated — along with the debate team, with its high cost but low student turnout. Furthermore, Richfield has used interns for counselors, social workers and psychologists to offset cut staff.

White Bear Lake Area Schools Superintendent Ted Blaesing said his district also reduced one course offering for every high school student, mandating that students take a study hall. Middle school students also lost a class period. "Over the last five years, we had to cut 73 regular education teaching staff, and next year class sizes will rise to 28, 34, and 35.5 in elementary, middle and senior high."

The cross subsidy for the state, according to the [Department of Education](#) will be more than

\$518 million in the state in fiscal year 2007 that local school districts have to make up.

[Rep. Sandra Peterson](#) (DFL-New Hope) said there is a "growing tension" between regular education and special education because of "continual cross subsidy of funding required by school districts to meet the special education mandates." Peterson blames the state and federal government.

"Special education funding needs to be given to districts so they don't have to take it out of their general fund to subsidize those programs," she said.


The state's answer

This year, a new law hopes to address the problem. Sponsored by [Rep. Mindy Greiling](#) (DFL-Roseville) and signed into law May 30 by Gov. Tim Pawlenty, the legislation will increase the amount of funding for special education from \$529 million in fiscal year 2007 to \$694 million in fiscal year 2008 and \$719 million in fiscal year 2009.

In the new law, total special education excess cost aid from the state, which is available for special education programs and services, will increase from \$105 million in fiscal year 2007 to \$111 million for fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

Not everyone is happy with this approach. If you asked superintendents if they would prefer more general formula or special education dollars, "You're going to get different answers all across the state," [Rep. Bud Heidegerken](#) (R-Freeport) said.

Heidegerken believes that money should be placed on the general formula, and said it would be better spent helping students with early intervention, before kindergarten. "If they're in special education in third or fourth grade, they will be there 'til they're in 11th and 12th grade," he said. "There are still 21 1/2-year-olds in high school."

"With this bill, there will be winners and losers," Heidegerken said. 

Collegiate costs

Additional money seeks to keep tuition increases down

By Mike Cook

A new higher education funding plan was given a mostly passing grade by the state's top official.

Technically sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park) and [Sen. Sandy Pappas](#) (DFL-St. Paul), the law contains nearly \$3.17 billion in funding for the University of Minnesota, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, Mayo Foundation and the [Office of Higher Education](#).

The funding increase is approximately \$361.5 million, or 13 percent, over the November forecast base for the 2008-09 biennium and 14 percent higher in the base for fiscal years 2010-11.

Performance measures are established for the university and MnSCU so that 1 percent of their funding is contingent on meeting three of five goals established for each.

The law also includes \$58.6 million in new financial aid monies, including a \$2.5 million increase in child care grants; and a 4 percent reduction in the assigned family responsibility factor, an increase in the tuition and fee maximums, and an increase in living and miscellaneous expense allowance, all of which are used to calculate state grant awards. It also increases by \$100 the matching grant in the college savings program for families with an annual income below \$50,000, and increases from 5 percent to 10 percent the contributions for program participants with a family income between \$50,000 and \$80,000.

[Gov. Tim Pawlenty](#) line-item vetoed two provisions: \$100,000 for loan repayment assistance to attorneys who enter "public interest law," and \$50,000 for the Washington Center for Internship Experiences. The former, he said, has been funded for 15 years without taxpayer assistance and should continue to be funded by the state's legal community. The latter he axed because many

postsecondary schools are working with private organizations to establish internships without state money.

"When the bill left the House it was an excellent bill; when it came back from conference committee it was a great bill," said [Rep. Tom Rukavina](#) (DFL-Virginia), who sponsored the original House bill ([HF797](#)), and was the lead House negotiator. "Now that we've been forced to do a little more compromising, it's still a very, very fair and OK bill for students and the people of the state of Minnesota."

The primary change from the bill [vetoed](#) by Gov. Tim Pawlenty May 9 is a funding increase in the governor's ACHIEVE plan to encourage low-income students to take rigorous high school courses in exchange for \$1,200 in college funding.

"The program is piggybacked on the federal Academic Competitiveness Grant program," Pappas said. "The eligibility requirements are almost the same, but the federal government is going to provide up to \$750 for the first year of undergraduate studies and up to \$1,300 the second year for full-time students. Our

students can be full time or part time."

The law calls for \$3 million of program funding in fiscal year 2008, \$7 million in fiscal year 2009 and \$10 million in each year of the 2010-11 biennium. The governor's initial biennial request was \$112 million, but that was decreased to \$78.9 million in his January budget recommendations.

Conference committee members expressed concern that the initial outlined "rigorous" standards were no more than what a student needs to meet the state's graduation standards, so the final product requires a student to at least attain a C in the required classes. They also expressed concern about funding a pilot program instead of using the money elsewhere to help students.

Other changes from the first bill include the elimination of a small surcharge assessed on nonresidential construction projects that would have gone toward helping fund construction management programs at three campuses, and an additional \$2 million for the Minnesota GI Bill along with a provision allowing the money to be used for upper division classes.

"I've been real encouraged by what is in the bill," [Rep. Carol McFarlane](#) (R-White Bear Lake) said on the House floor. "It has new money for our institutions, it holds down tuition for

"I've been real encouraged by what is in the bill. It has new money for our institutions, it holds down tuition for our students, there are programs to inspire students to be more prepared for college and it contains tuition banding that will keep costs down for our students."

— Rep. Carol McFarlane

our students, there are programs to inspire students to be more prepared for college and it contains tuition banding that will keep costs down for our students."

Banding tuition at the university's Crookston, Duluth and Morris campuses will allow students to

pay for only 13 credits, even if they take more. When combined with other funding, it is expected to result in slight tuition increases at the Crookston and Duluth campuses, but an expected 10 percent decrease at Morris for a Minnesota student from a family with income under \$150,000.

[House Minority Leader Marty Seifert](#) (R-Marshall) is not pleased that a tuition freeze, which he successfully amended to the

College costs continued on page 36

Little more than status quo

Many transportation initiatives fail to become law

By Mike Cook

Things may only get worse for Minnesotans accustomed to sitting in congestion, driving on bumpy roads and not being able to get from Point A to Point B using public transportation.

After months of talking about funding transportation improvements, the best legislators could do is a so-called “lights-on” law. Without it, the [Department of Transportation](#) would shut down July 1.

They initially passed a package ([HF946](#)) that supporters said would have put more than \$8 billion into highways, city and county roads, and transit in the next decade. However, it included a number of tax increases and was vetoed May 15 by Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Included in his veto message was that the “entire array of tax increases in this bill would cost an average family in Minnesota up to \$500 per year.”

With about 15 minutes left in the 2007 session, an attempt to override the veto could garner just 83 of the 90 needed House votes. [Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba](#) (DFL-Long Prairie) and [Rep. Sandy Wollschlaeger](#) (DFL-Cannon Falls) voted no along with all Republicans.

“It’s hard to believe we want to raise taxes when gas is at an all-time high,” said [Rep. Paul Kohls](#) (R-Victoria), one of four naysayers to express their view on the House floor. Nobody in support of the bill spoke.

As a result, a nearly \$3.8 billion status quo package was signed into law. Sponsored by [Rep. Bernie Lieder](#) (DFL-Crookston) and [Sen. Steve Murphy](#) (DFL-Red Wing) it is about \$380 million less than the vetoed proposal.

“Much more needs to be done, but the advocates overreached,” Pawlenty said May 22. He suggested supporters shouldn’t have went “for the whole enchilada and get nothing. ... I told leaders that if they came

in with a more reasonable plan, maybe the results would have been different.” He doesn’t expect those groups to stop, however. “The advocates will not be happy until they get a gas tax increase.”

“Generally the strategy of all or nothing usually doesn’t work. It doesn’t allow for cooperation and compromise, and it doesn’t allow you to move ahead,” added [Rep. Steve Sviggum](#) (R-Kenyon). “It’s got to be the 7.5-cent gas tax, and it’s got the 40 percent increase in the car license tabs, and it’s got to be the half-cent sales tax, and it’s got to be the wheelage tax.”

To keep the Metro Transit system operating as is, the law provides \$20 million in one-time money to the Metropolitan Council. If funded at base levels, the system would have had to make some severe cutbacks, Lieder said.

The law does transfer some money within the trunk highway fund to the Minnesota State Patrol.

“This year is probably the first year in the state’s history where we are going to have a candidate school for state patrol that is very diverse in nature,” Murphy said. “The chief feels that it is imperative that this school move forward and that we get these troopers up and ready to go because there are a lot of retirements that are going to happen inside the state patrol.”


Driver and vehicle services fees are raised in the law, primarily a 75-cent increase in a driver’s license, instruction permit and identification card. The goal is to make the [Driver and Vehicle Services Division of the Department of Public Safety](#) a fee-based service.

Also included is a one-time increase in the airport development and assistance fund and \$200,000 for an airport funding advisory task force. “This is going to help us once and for all figure out what the funding levels should be for our airports,” Murphy said.

Language is also included in the law so the Northstar Commuter Rail project continues without delay.

The lone line-item veto by Pawlenty was \$200,000 to the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs for participation in the Urban Partnership Agreement Congestion program. In his [veto message](#), the governor said the law allocates up to \$1 million to fund state activities in support of a federal program. “If the state is to fund their activities with Trunk Highway funds, those activities must be managed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation under appropriate consulting and/or technical service contractual agreements.”

Additionally, an omnibus transportation policy bill ([HF1351](#)*/[SF1971](#)), sponsored by Murphy and [Rep. Frank Hornstein](#) (DFL-Mpls) received conference committee approval on the last day of session, but was not brought to the House or Senate floor. In part, it would have permitted heavier truck weights in some instances; changed the way impound lots notify people about their vehicle and let people get certain belongings; required a study on greenhouse gas reductions; required a report on Internet-based driver education; and it would have changed speeding tickets, so that speeds of 69 mph or less in a 60 mph zone would not go on a driver’s record.

[HF562](#)*/[SF360](#)/CH143 

Reluctant approval

Governor, legislative leaders disagree on E-12 package quality

By STEPHEN HARDING

Ascaled down E-12 education law covers everything from declining enrollment to the creation of a task force to compare federal and state special education requirements.

While critical of the process used to construct the law, [Rep. Mindy Greiling](#) (DFL-Roseville) said she still thinks the law is good. “We have over an 8 percent increase for the biennium and \$794 million in new funding, and that is nothing to sneeze at.”

Pawlenty signed the law with reluctance. “This K-12 education bill failed to provide the level of general formula funding I proposed. It is also devoid of any real educational reform or accountability initiatives. Worse yet, this bill actually steps backward from the reform efforts from prior years,” he wrote in his [veto message](#). Nearly \$5.5 million in spending was red-lined.

House Republicans echoed the state’s top official during a floor debate, calling the product underwhelming, mediocre and shameful. They also said it would widen the funding disparity between school districts.

Early Childhood Family Education is increased 14 percent and Head Start is going up by 5 percent, said [Rep. Nora Slawik](#) (DFL-Maplewood), the House Early Childhood Learning Finance Division chairwoman. “Overall the early childhood package is very good. We’re back to restoring the cuts in 2003 and moving forward from there.”

Effective July 1, 2007, unless otherwise noted, the law outlines \$13.7 billion in spending and policy for the biennium. It is \$197 million less than the original House bill ([HF6](#)), but it’s still a \$794 million biennial increase over the base.

New laws and funding

The general education fund is being increased 2 percent in fiscal year 2008 or about \$93 million, and 1 percent in fiscal year 2009, or about \$150 million. The House bill proposed a 3 percent increase each year.

A major House DFL priority, voluntary all-day kindergarten funding, was dramatically cut in the law. Originally the \$94 million allocated in fiscal year 2009 would have covered all students that wanted to participate, but the law allocates \$32.5 million for the biennium. Nonetheless, Greiling said “significant steps” have been made.

A nine-member school finance reform task force will be established to create a standard and index to ensure that the education funding formula remains adequate over time. It also will simplify the remaining school formulas, analyze the different categories of the funding formula and establish a schedule for implementation of the other new formulas. This is from [HF1702/SF1232](#), sponsored by [Rep. Tim Faust](#) (DFL-Mora) and [Sen. Kathy Saltzman](#) (DFL-Woodbury). This is effective May 31, 2007.

The single biggest increase in funding is for special education, which received \$1.6 billion for the biennium. The funding is \$223

million more than the House proposed and \$172 million less than the Senate.

In fiscal year 2008, special education aid funding will increase to \$694 million and to \$719 million in fiscal year 2009.

The law creates a special education task force to compare state and federal education requirements and see what, if any, state requirements exceed federal requirements. Those that do could be scaled back to meet the minimum federal requirements to save on funding. By Feb. 15, 2008, the task force must present its findings to the Legislature.

Other funding provisions in the law include:

- \$90 million in one-time technology funding;
- ECFE funding increased to \$42.9 million for the biennium;
- Head Start funding level restored to 2003 levels at \$40.2 million for the biennium;
- \$20 million for school readiness programs;
- \$5.4 million for increased gifted and talented funding;
- \$5.3 million for after-school community grants;
- \$1.25 million in fiscal year 2008 for adult literacy grants for recent immigrants;
- \$500,000 for Mandarin Chinese Project language grants; and
- \$200,000 to help with declining enrollment in Browns Valley.

Equitable funding concerns

The main sticking point for House Republicans was the funding increase disparity for Minneapolis and St. Paul compared with other school districts. Under the new law, Minneapolis will receive a larger increase in its biennial per pupil funding than any other school district. The state’s largest district will receive \$1,416 over the biennium per pupil unit, while other school districts will average \$926.

“The concern of mine in the bill is equity. It happens to stem from the importance of the disparity gap in Minnesota,” said [Rep. Steve Sviggum](#) (R-Kenyon). As an example, he said districts like Cannon Falls will see a \$285 disparity in fiscal year 2008, and the disparity will grow by almost \$1,000 in the second year of the biennium.

Minneapolis will receive more funding due to its large population of limited English

E-12 continued on page 36

One big red X

Key provision leads to omnibus tax bill veto

By SONJA HEGMAN

As promised, the omnibus tax bill was vetoed by [Gov. Tim Pawlenty](#).

It contained a number of provisions, including tax breaks for expansions of the Mall of America in Bloomington and Thomson West in Eagan, a \$39 million state guarantee for costs associated with the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul and tighter tax rules for companies with foreign operations.

"I am supportive of many of the tax provisions in the bill such as increases in direct property tax relief to homeowners, sales tax exemptions for agriculture products, acceleration of the single sales factor for corporate income tax and the increase for military combat credit," Pawlenty wrote in his [veto message](#).

His problem was with a provision that would have factored inflation into future budget projections. Supporters said it would give a truer description of the state's financial situation. To eliminate it, he would have to veto the entire bill, because line-item vetoes are not allowed for policy provisions. He warned legislators before the bill was passed that the inflation provision could bring down the whole measure.

"When legislators and the Governor assemble the state budget, we shouldn't assume that every program should automatically grow," Pawlenty wrote. "For some programs, increases will be warranted. Other programs, however, may deserve a smaller increase or perhaps no increase at all. Each program should be evaluated on its merits and the overall growth in the budget should reflect that type of approach rather than assuming autopilot increase."

The demise of the bill won't necessarily force a special session. Current tax laws will remain in effect without any changes.

Sponsored by [Rep. Ann Lenczewski](#)

(DFL-Bloomington) and [Sen. Tom Bakk](#) (DFL-Cook), the final product did not contain a new tax tier for the state's wealthiest residents. Supporters believed it would have helped provide about \$450 million in property tax relief to 90 percent of the state.

But the bill still aimed to ease the impact of rising property taxes, mainly by funneling more state money to lower levels of government.

It also would have:

- given homeowners \$32 million in property tax refunds in the 2008-09 biennium, and \$65 million in 2010-11;
- given local governments an additional \$83 million in state aid in the 2008-09 biennium, and at least \$70 million in 2010-11;
- given disabled veterans an additional \$3.7 million in property tax relief in the 2008-09 biennium, and \$8 million in 2010-11;
- modified existing tax language so that state businesses with foreign operations would pay an additional \$125 million in state taxes in the next two years, and an extra \$182 million in the 2010-11 biennium. The provision was sought by both the House and Senate.

Economic development

The bill included a public financing package for Phase II of the Mall of America. Under the proposal, a metropolitan area-wide levy would have been imposed on the fiscal

disparities pool to help fund construction of a \$180 million, 8,000-stall parking ramp. This would have imposed a very low rate tax on all commercial-industrial property in the seven-county metro area. The pool shares 40 percent of the growth in the commercial-industrial tax base of the seven counties; thereby allowing all cities to share in the region's growth, reduce competition for tax base and spread the benefits of regional public investments.

"I support having the state assist with public infrastructure improvements related to the Mall of America expansion and would encourage the legislature to explore another funding source that will allow the project to move forward," Pawlenty wrote.

In addition, the city of Bloomington would have been authorized to impose several local taxes, revenues of which would have been used to help finance the parking:

- a sales and use tax of up to 1 percent within a special taxing district;
- a lodging tax of up to 1 percent in the city;
- a tax of up to 1 percent on admissions to entertainment and recreational facilities and rental of recreation equipment at sites within a special taxing district; and
- a food and beverage tax of up to 3 percent within a special taxing district.

A tax increment financing district in the bill authorized Bloomington to transfer eight parcels from Phase I of the Mall of America TIF district to the Phase II TIF district. This would have extended the duration limit for collecting tax increments from those parcels by three years.

The city of Eagan would have been authorized to create a tax increment financing district for Thomson West that would have diverted property taxes from the company and expansion to pay for streets, parking, sewer, water and other improvements on the site.

Corporate franchise tax

The bill would have made two changes to the foreign source income provisions of the corporate franchise tax.

The qualifying rules for foreign operating corporations would have been modified to require that the corporation derive 80 percent of its income from active foreign sources. It

Taxes continued on page 36

Soldier continued from page 27

an office. The mission is to provide information and assistance to student veterans or their family members at the school regarding available resources. Pfeffer said the goal isn't for the state to come in and tell a campus what to do or how the office should be run, but to offer help in getting their program going. "Each community has different needs."

Since last August, 35 new centers have been established, serving more than 26,000 individuals.

With the expected return of nearly 3,000 deployed National Guard members later this summer, Pfeffer said the need for these offices is critical. "Many of these returning vets will be taking advantage of their education benefits, and we want to do everything we can to help them succeed."

This year, both the governor and the department proposed the program's expansion. However, a \$900,000 biennial appropriation only made it into the omnibus agriculture and veterans finance bill by amendment, after a nudge from Veterans Affairs Commissioner Clark Dyrud. The bill received overwhelming bipartisan support, and Gov. Tim Pawlenty moved it into law on May 1.

Pfeffer said the appropriation will allow for additional staff to help more campuses get resource centers up and running. He said the cost of running the centers is on the institutions' "own dime, but the staff is there to act as a resource for them."

Talking things though

The need to talk seems to differentiate this returning group of veterans from those

previous, Pfeffer said. "World War II vets rarely talked about their experience, and are only beginning to tell their stories now. Vietnam vets came home, put their uniforms away and felt they couldn't talk about it. But this new group seems to want to talk."

A report concerning the offices' activities presented to the Legislature bears that out. Of the contacts made in 2006, 32 percent of those were for conversation. Don't dismiss the "chit chat" as unimportant, Pfeffer said. It quickly turns to talk about problems and questions about accessing benefits.

Pfeffer sees the need for the offices to continue for some time. "It's not only for the returning soldiers now. We still have more over there. We believe we have a long run."



Development continued from page 29

Minnesota's doing worse than the national average, and this governor took \$35 million out of the jobs and economic development committee."

Housing

The law funnels \$114.56 million into affordable house programs including a \$12.1 million base increase and \$27.5 million in one-time funds.

"Increased funding for affordable housing will allow for construction and redevelopment of affordable housing units across the state," Murphysaid. "It will provide supportive housing for the homeless and prevent foreclosures by increasing prevention assistance."

The Challenge Grant Program, which provides deferred grants and loans to local governments and nonprofit developers to acquire housing units, will receive a \$15 million one-time bump. The Housing Trust Fund, which provides no-interest deferred loans to local governments and public and private organizations to finance

affordable permanent and supportive rental housing and limited equity cooperative housing, receives \$5 million in one-time money and a \$500,000 base bump.

Also funded is a \$7.5 million base increase for family homelessness prevention; a \$2 million base increase for a program that provides rental assistance for households with an income below 50 percent of the area median level, where at least one adult has a persistent and serious mental illness; and a \$1.3 million one-time jolt and \$630,000 base increase for a program that provides deferred loans of up to \$15,000 to low-income homeowners that need to correct health and safety hazards in their home.

Other components of the law include:

- creation of a Packinghouse Workers Bill of Rights;
- a requirement that independent residential and commercial construction contractors need to get a certificate from the [Department of Labor and Industry](#), which would exempt them from having worker's compensation paid on them by an employer;

- enactment of the Safe Patient Handling Act to help prevent on-the-job injuries for nurses and nursing home and hospital workers through the proper use of the patient-lift equipment;
- creation of a new program to assist businesses with gap financing for technology and other improvements;
- an increase in protection for employee whistleblowers;
- an increase in size and duty expansion of the Minnesota Boxing Commission, which will also oversee mixed martial arts competitions;
- requiring retail stores to let people with certain medical conditions, such as Crohn's disease, have access to nonpublic restrooms;
- \$1.3 million for the Minnesota Snowbate program, which helps bring film and television productions to the state; and
- \$150,000 for battle flag preservation by the Minnesota Historical Society.

[HF122](#)*/[SF62](#)/CH135

Frequently called numbers

(Area code 651)

House Public Information Services

175 State Office Building296-2146

Committee Schedule Hotline

175 State Office Building296-9283

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol296-2314

House Index

211 Capitol296-6646

Senate Information

231 Capitol296-0504

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol296-2344

Voice mail/order bills.....296-2343

Senate Index

110 Capitol296-2887

Committee Hotline, Senate296-8088

College costs continued from page 31

House bill, is not in the final product. "The biggest disappointment from our caucus' perspective is that when we put on the tuition freeze we did it in good faith on a bipartisan vote. ... We hope the boards take a responsible approach on the appropriations that they have to control tuition."

Rukavina said it is tough to control increased costs when the systems are still recovering from the financial hit they took during the state's \$4.5 billion shortfall four years ago. Nonetheless, he expects the new funding to keep tuition increases to less than 4 percent at MnSCU and less than 3 percent for university undergraduates.

"There's no way you could have done better when you have a system that was decimated,


and you're trying to keep students and the systems operative and the grant program going. We don't want Bonehead University. We want MnSCU and the University of Minnesota. That's what we've got in this bill."

Not included in the law was the so-called Dream Act. Instead, the law grants \$3.4 million to seven two-year colleges so they can eliminate nonresident tuition. This will allow children of illegal immigrants, who have previously had to pay nonresident tuition, to pay the lower in-state rates at those colleges. Thirteen MnSCU institutions already charge a flat tuition rate.

Other law provisions include:

- each MnSCU institution is to provide information on personal financial management to students, and the university is requested to do the same;

- no state money can be used for costs related to the early termination of an athletic coach at the University of Minnesota;
- selection of the university's Board of Regents and MnSCU Board of Trustees is altered;
- \$750,000 in one-time money for a clean room at St. Paul College to teach nanotechnology manufacturing;
- \$500,000 to "identify and improve" ways to reduce college textbook costs, including more information from the publishers on revisions between current and former editions, and a possible textbook rental program; and
- \$200,000 for the women's hockey program at Bemidji State University.

[HF1063*/SF1051/CH144](#) 

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proficiency and special education students and those receiving free and reduced lunch.

"You're robbing St. Peter to pay for St. Paul, and you're robbing Minneota and Marshall to pay Minneapolis," said [Rep. Doug Magnus](#) (R-Slayton).

Vetoed items

Pawlenty vetoed four provisions:

- \$4.5 million for the merger of the Hennepin County and Minneapolis library systems that was signed into law elsewhere ([HF1973*/SF1812](#));
- \$500,000 to pay teachers for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. While he is strongly supportive of meaningful professional development,

Pawlenty believes that the appropriation would serve a limited number of teachers and questioned the cost-effectiveness of the program;

- \$400,000 to establish an Independent Office of Educational Accountability, Pawlenty said that the duties of the office would duplicate those provided by the [Department of Education](#); and
- \$75,000 in fiscal year 2008 to hire an independent contractor to assist the education finance task force authorized in the law. Pawlenty said Education Department and legislative staff are available, making the appropriation unnecessary.


Controversial compromise

Because of no agreement amongst legislative

leaders and the governor on total spending, a conference committee did not meet for the last three weeks of session.

Instead, a bill to change education code language was amended and approved May 14 on the House floor to add money to the funding formula in each year of the biennium in case the original omnibus K-12 education finance bill didn't get out of the conference committee.

With no public hearing, the Senate rules committee amended the bill to include what became the final product, the full Senate approved it and sent it to the House for concurrence. "The other body took over and rewrote the bill in the dark of night and here we are, take it or leave it," said [House Minority Leader Marty Seifert](#) (R-Marshall).

[HF2245/SFnone/CH146](#) 

Taxes continued from page 34

would replace the present law test that largely focuses on where the property and payroll of the corporation is located.

Also, tax benefits accruing to corporations under the foreign royalty exclusion would have been denied to income from domestic sources, but the rate of exclusion would have been increased from 80 percent to 90 percent.

These changes would have taken effect beginning in tax year 2008.

Other provisions

- kidney dialysis equipment and breast pumps would have been exempt from state sales tax;

- an extra payment of \$500,000 in fiscal years 2008 and 2009 would have been provided to Cook County and Grand Marais for costs related to the Ham Lake fire of 2007;
- the Metropolitan Council would have been permitted to issue up to \$33.6 million of bonds or other debt instruments to fund the regional transit master plan and transit capital improvements;
- local option sales taxes would have been permitted for Bemidji, Clearwater, Cook County, Duluth, North Mankato and Winona;

- a joint legislative subcommittee on sales and use tax would have been created to, in part, examine the revenue productivity and equity implications of the current sales and use tax base and alternative tax bases; and
- Fergus Falls would have received \$200,000 each year to market and promote development and reuse of the Regional Treatment Center campus site.

[HF2268*/SF1933/CH149](#) 

Friday, May 18

HF2503-Jaros (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Lake and river name changes provided.

HF2504-Madore (DFL)
Finance
Minnesota Zoological Garden asset preservation funding provided.

HF2505-Haws (DFL)
Finance
Northstar commuter rail extension design funding provided.

HF2506-Seifert (R)
Finance
Transportation, Metropolitan Council and public safety funding provided; driver and vehicle services fees modified; bonds issued; and money appropriated.

HF2507-Knuth (DFL)
Finance
Arden Hills highway interchange improvements funding provided.

HF2508-Knuth (DFL)
Finance
Arden Hills highway interchange improvements funding provided.

HF2509-Cornish (R)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Obstructing arrest by peace officer using a weapon criminal penalty imposed.

HF2510-Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services
Epilepsy drug substitution by pharmacist without consent prohibited.

HF2511-Koenen (DFL)
Finance
Clara City walking path funding provided.

HF2512-Gottwalt (R)
Taxes
St. Cloud public safety facilities construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF2513-Mariani (DFL)
Rules & Legislative Administration
Compensation Council provided the authority to establish salaries for legislators, judges and constitutional officers.

HF2514-Rukavina (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Deferred compensation plan restrictions amended.

HF2515-Abeler (R)
E-12 Education
Nutrient analysis of school menus required.

HF2516-Lanning (R)
Finance
Moorhead; Northwestern Minnesota Regional Sports Center construction funding provided.

HF2517-Murphy, M. (DFL)
Finance
Duluth airport terminal facilities funding provided.

HF2518-Huntley (DFL)
Finance
Duluth sanitary sewer overflow facilities funding provided.

HF2519-Doty (DFL)
Finance
Garrison and Kathio Township wastewater collection system funding provided.

HF2520-Jaros (DFL)
Finance
Duluth; Lake Superior Zoo polar bear exhibit expansion funding provided.

HF2521-Doty (DFL)
Finance
Trunk Highway 25 in Pierz reconstruction funding provided.

Saturday, May 19

HF2522-Tschumper (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Health care availability and affordability guaranteed, Minnesota Health Care Plan established, report required and money appropriated.

HF2523-Heidgerken (R)
Finance
Sauk Centre veterans facility funding provided.

HF2524-Ward (DFL)
Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs
Resident student definition expanded to include the spouse and children of a resident veteran for purposes of determining eligibility for state financial aid for higher education.

HF2525-Erickson (R)
Finance
Princeton regional public safety facility funding provided.

HF2526-Madore (DFL)
E-12 Education
Schools required to allow students with a disability who have not competed special instruction and services to attend their high school graduation ceremonies.

HF2527-Moe (DFL)
Finance
Low-carbon fuel standard established to reduce carbon intensity of fuels by 2020, statutory references aligned and money appropriated.

HF2528-Nelson (DFL)
Finance
Public housing rehabilitation funding provided.

HF2529-Seifert (R)
Finance
Transportation, Metropolitan Council and public safety funding provided; fees and accounts modified; and bonds issued.

HF2530-Slawik (DFL)
Finance
Maplewood family shelter, affordable housing and residences for seniors funding provided.

HF2531-Thissen (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Persons prohibited from possessing firearms for reasons of mental health, statutory list amended by cross-referencing federal law, and state agency reporting required.

HF2532-Tschumper (DFL)
Finance
Hokah City Hall renovation funding provided.

HF2533-Tschumper (DFL)
Finance
Chatfield Brass Band Lending Library improvements funding provided.

HF2534-Tschumper (DFL)
Finance
Houston County Historical Society building renovation and addition funding provided.

HF2535-Benson (DFL)
Finance
Long-term homeless supportive housing funding provided.

HF2536-Lanning (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
Watershed basin management districts authorized with taxing authority.

HF2537-Anzelc (DFL)
Transportation Finance Division
Remote-control operation of trains regulated over highway intersections and bridges and near international border.

HF2538-Madore (DFL)
Finance
Dakota County; Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit funding provided.

HF2539-Morgan (DFL)
Finance
Dakota County public safety technology and support center funding provided.

HF2540-Hansen (DFL)
Finance
Dakota County; Robert Street corridor transitway funding provided.

Sunday, May 20

HF2541-Atkins (DFL)
Finance
Ice arena facilities funding provided.

HF2542-Seifert (R)
Finance
Southwest Regional Amateur Sports Facility funding provided.

HF2543-Knuth (DFL)
Finance
Metro North Regional Sports Facility funding provided.

HF2544-Atkins (DFL)
Finance
Inver Grove Heights Veterans Memorial Community Center expansion funding provided.

HF2545-Knuth (DFL)
Finance
Ramsey County bioscience and environmental library funding provided.

HF2546-Atkins (DFL)
Finance
Mississippi River Bridge 5600 between Inver Grove Heights and St. Paul Park renovation funding provided.

HF2547-Laine (DFL)
Finance
Fridley train station funding provided.

Monday, May 21

HF2548-Ozment (R)
Finance
Dakota County; County Road 42 at Trunk Highway 52 interchange reconstruction funding provided.

HF2549-Juhnke (DFL)
Finance
General Railroad Safety Act adopted.

HF2550-Dill (DFL)
Taxes
Income tax rate increased for certain brackets, receipts dedicated for property tax relief and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF2551-Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Clothing sales tax exemption repealed, sales tax rate decreased, income tax credit established, local option sales tax rates adjusted and money appropriated.

HF2552-Knuth (DFL)
Energy Finance & Policy Division
Homeowners associations prohibited from restricting the installation and operation of a solar energy system.

Bills not acted upon in 2007 could come to life in 2008

When the gavel came down on the legislative session at midnight May 21, it didn't put an end to the business of the 85th session.

Minnesota is one of several states operating on a biennium: the first year is used to set the state budget, and the second year is generally used to consider capital investment projects. Unlike the second year, when legislators adjourn sine die, which means "without a day," in the first year a date for return is established. The Legislature is scheduled to reconvene Feb. 12, 2008, at noon.

Of the 2,552 bills introduced in the House and 2,363 in the Senate, only 150 were passed by both bodies and sent to the governor. So, what happened to the remaining 4,765 bills? Some were duplicates, some were folded into other bills, but most are sitting in limbo, waiting for possible action in the 2008 session.

The future of any bill depends upon where it was in the process when session ended:

- Bills on the General Register return to the last standing committee or division where they were acted upon. The rules also apply to any bill up for consideration on the Consent Calendar, Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar.
- For appointed conference committees that have not submitted a report upon adjournment, the bill returns to the body where it originates and is laid on the table. The conference committee is discharged.
- Bills that passed one body and not the other remain alive for the second year of the biennium. The house that approved the bill in the first year need not repass the bill in the second.

- House files amended by the Senate coming back for concurrence are available to take up when session begins.
- Bills pending before the rules committee of either body return to the standing committee to which the bill was previously referred.
- Bills vetoed by the governor are returned to the body where the bill originated and tabled.
- Bills remaining in standing committees can be taken up in the second year of the biennium in the committee to which they were referred.

For information on how a bill becomes law, go to www.house.mn/hinfo/govser/GOVSER6.pdf or call House Public Information Services at (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550 and request the Minnesota State Government Series State Law Process.

— L. SCHUTZ

New Laws and their effective dates

Editor's note: The following chart includes the 150 bills that passed both the House and the Senate and were sent to the governor for consideration. The bills are, for the most part, sorted according to the committee of origin. An asterisk marks the version of the bill the House and Senate approved and sent on to the governor.

Here are definitions of some of the terms used in the chart.

Governor's options

• enactment

The date the governor signed the bill into law.

• line-item veto (liv)

The power or action of the governor to reject individual items within an appropriations bill while approving the rest of the bill.

• veto

The governor did not approve the bill.

Effective dates

Each act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day stated in the act itself, unless it specifies a different time. Examples:

• Aug. 1, 2007

Each act the governor signs into law, except those that make appropriations, take effect on Aug. 1 following final enactment, unless the act specifies a different date.

• July 1, 2007

An appropriations act, an act spending money, takes effect at the beginning of the first day of July following its final enactment, unless the act specifies a different date.

• Day after enactment

The act becomes effective the day after the governor signs it.

• Upon local approval

A special law requiring approval from the local government unit it affects becomes effective the day after the local government unit's governing body files a certificate with the secretary of state, unless the act specifies a later date.

• Various

Different parts of the act have different effective dates.

• with exceptions (we)

Act includes other effective dates.

• with qualifications (wq)

Act adds conditions to the effective date.

• retroactive (retro.)

Act goes into effect as of a specified date in the past.

2007 MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE					CH	Governor's signature	Effective date
FINAL ACTION AS OF MAY 31, 2007							
HF—House File SF—Senate File R—Resolution					CH—Chapter we—with exceptions wq—with qualifications	*—bill the governor signed or vetoed	
HF	Author	SF	Author	Bill Title			

AGRICULTURE							
274*	Juhnke	227	Vickerman	Rural Finance Authority agricultural loan funding provided.	16	3/30/2007	3/31/2007
2227*	Juhnke	1925	Vickerman	Omnibus agricultural and veterans finance bill.	45	5/4/2007	various
BANKING							
2056	Atkins	1920*	Sparks	Financial institutions debt, charges, expenses, electronic terminals and investments regulated.	44	5/4/2007	various
1758*	Davnie	1574	Olson, M.	Financial institutions access cards regulated and security breach liability established.	108	5/21/2007	various
BONDING							
87*	Thao	257	Moua	St. Paul Asian Pacific Cultural Center predesign expenditures authorized.	4	3/2/2007	3/3/2007
886*	Hausman	2157	Langseth	Omnibus capital investment finance bill.	38	vetoed	
2433*	Marquart	2236	Langseth	Browns Valley flood relief funding provided, flood mitigation projects authorized and money appropriated.	122	5/23/2007	5/24/2007
BUSINESS							
1441*	Simon	792	Scheid	Limited purpose trust companies nonsubstantive term changes provided.	12	3/30/2007	8/1/2007
CONSUMERS							
1364	Atkins	1168*	Sparks	Building contractors insurance requirements modified.	9	3/27/2007	8/1/2007
993	Norton	1735*	Higgins	Radon control provisions adoption required relating to building codes.	40	5/4/2007	8/1/2007
189	DeLaForest	372*	Gerlach	Ticket scalping prohibition repealed.	47	5/7/2007	8/1/2007
512	Atkins	69*	Sieben	Gift certificates and gift cards expiration dates and service fees prohibited.	93	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1013	Otremba	112*	Olseen	Body piercing services prohibited for persons under the age of 18 without parental consent.	98	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1675	Simon	1333*	Latz	Car buyers' bill of rights enacted, disclosures required, sale of "certified" used motor vehicles regulated, and cancellation option required on purchase of a used motor vehicle.	99	5/21/2007	1/1/2008
1656	Thissen	1262*	Higgins	Lead-containing jewelry products manufacture and sale regulated.	132	5/25/2007	various
CRIME							
455*	Murphy, M.	300	Higgins	Public defense provisions updated and clarified, right to representation modified, public defender system supervision provided, chief public appellate defender appointment provided and public defender co-payments statutory language stricken.	61	5/10/2007	8/1/2007
49	Lesch	493*	Moua	Criminal gang activity as public nuisance.	150	5/25/2007	8/1/2007
DEVELOPMENT							
none	none	2089*	Tomassoni	Omnibus jobs and economic development bill.	55	vetoed	
556	Beard	218*	Rest	Airport zoning disclosure duties established.	64	5/10/2007	8/1/2007
122*	Rukavina	62	Tomassoni	Omnibus economic development finance bill.	135	5/25/2007	various
1425	Holberg	1499*	Bonoff	Students authorized to participate in high school league-sponsored activities after completing licensed treatment programs.	7	3/20/2007	3/21/2007
EDUCATION							
504	Hilstrom	646*	Moua	School board policies prohibiting bullying and intimidation required to address electronic and Internet use.	53	5/9/2007	8/1/2007
2245*	Greiling	none	none	Omnibus E-12 education finance bill.	146	5/30/2007	various
ELECTIONS							
160*	Hilty	103	Higgins	Help America Vote Act account appropriations transfer authorized.	5	3/14/2007	3/15/2007
EMPLOYMENT							
966*	Howes	817	Anderson	State nurse overtime provisions modified and report required.	46	5/8/2007	8/1/2007
1554	Atkins	1495*	Sparks	Payroll card accounts regulation extended.	87	5/18/2007	5/19/2007
287	Holberg	221*	Neuville	Employers required to give notice of employee rights relating to personnel record review and access.	119	5/23/2007	1/1/2008
648	Mahoney	167*	Sparks	Unemployment insurance policy, housekeeping and style changes provided; rules incorporated into statute; fraud penalties modified; and certain unemployment benefits extended.	128	5/24/2007	various

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ENERGY

4	Peterson, A.	4*	Anderson	Renewable energy standard established.	3	2/22/2007	various
472*	Morrow	239	Sheran	Renewable energy production incentives eligibility period extended.	20	4/20/2007	4/21/2007
1555	Simon	1902*	Olseen	Energy forward pricing mechanisms terms defined.	68	5/14/2007	8/1/2007
660	Bly	563*	Doll	Renewable electric energy development benefits economic strategy required, and Legislative Electric Energy Task Force regulated.	107	5/21/2007	5/22/2007
436	Hilty	145*	Prettner Solon	Community-based energy development provided and greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan required.	136	5/25/2007	various

ENVIRONMENT

110*	Huntley	38	Rest	Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact enacted.	2	2/20/2007	Upon ratification of states party to the compact and consent by Congress
293*	Tingelstad	450	Anderson	Environment and natural resources funding provided, Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources meeting requirements modified.	30	5/3/2007	various
1016	Hansen	420*	Saxhaug	Forest pest control measures provided, approved firewood required on land administered by the commissioner of natural resources, and sale and distribution of firewood regulated.	36	5/3/2007	various
854*	Sailer	235	Higgins	Video display device collection, transportation and recycling provided; civil penalties imposed.	48	5/8/2007	5/9/2007
2410	Wagenius	2096*	Anderson	Omnibus environment, energy and natural resources finance bill.	57	5/8/2007	various
849	Moe	961*	Skogen	Shoreland resorts regulated.	92	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1316	Hortman	1085*	Marty	Mercury; sale of certain mercury-containing products prohibited; sale, use and disposal restrictions modified; consumer information required; and lamp recycling facility operation requirements modified.	109	5/21/2007	various

FAMILY

1400	Tingelstad	358*	Olson, M.	Adoption information assistance provided to genetic siblings.	49	5/8/2007	8/1/2007
1500	Smith	1271*	Neuville	Child support laws clarified and modified, enforcement provisions modified and time periods extended for enforcing child support judgments.	118	5/24/2007	various
1396*	Madore	795	Olson, M.	Guardianship and conservatorship recommendations study required.	126	5/25/2007	8/1/2007

GAMBLING

1691	Anzelc	1966*	Rest	Lawful gambling provisions modifications.	145	5/25/2007	various
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GAME & FISH

1021	Dill	1131*	Bakk	Omnibus game, fish and lands bill.	131	5/25/2007	various
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GOVERNMENT

1678	Johnson	1294*	Olseen	Public Utilities Commission electronic filing authorized.	10	3/27/2007	various
1200*	Kranz	983	Moua	Revisor's bill.	13	3/30/2007	8/1/2007
878*	Doty	1263	Gimse	Board of Animal Health consultants expanded to include the commissioner of agriculture.	19	4/20/2007	8/1/2007
2135	Loeffler	1949*	Rest	Minnesota Sesquicentennial Commission duties, powers and procedures modified.	29	5/3/2007	5/4/2007
958	Solberg	846*	Cohen	State agencies deficiency funding provided.	32	5/2/2007	5/3/2007
1294	Berns	1483*	Lourey	Minnesota Council on Disability sunset repealed.	33	5/3/2007	5/4/2007
1267	Morgan	1236*	Michel	State employees technical and housekeeping changes provided.	35	5/3/2007	various
465	Kranz	321*	Betzold	Independent nonprofit firefighting corporations included for joint exercise of powers agreements.	43	5/4/2007	8/1/2007
953	Kahn	1997*	Betzold	State government funding provided, state and local operations regulated, public employment provisions modified, Department of Employee Relations abolished.	56	vetoed	
1598	Lillie	1073*	Scheid	State labor agreements and compensation plans ratified.	63	5/10/2007	5/11/2007
1493	Simon	2030*	Gerlach	Surplus property rulemaking authority provided.	67	5/14/2007	8/1/2007

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1339	Poppe	1557*	Larson	State government record retention provision deleted.	76	5/14/2007	8/1/2007
1034	Peterson, A.	538*	Kubly	Heating and cooling policy established for building projects funded with state appropriations.	77	5/17/2007	7/1/2007
1486	Pelowski	1755*	Rest	Charitable organizations authorized to participate in joint powers agreements.	83	5/17/2007	8/1/2007
1549	Johnson	1019*	Rummel	Public Utilities Commission ex parte rules technical changes provided.	88	5/18/2007	8/1/2007
203	Mariani	118*	Pappas	Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board expanded to include legislators as nonvoting members.	94	5/21/2007	5/22/2007
790	Moe	1186*	Frederickson	Minnesota Public Facilities Authority Act and Pollution Control Agency project priority rule modified.	96	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1688	Pelowski	1556*	Larson	Office of Enterprise Technology terminology modified.	100	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1957	Bigham	1597*	Rest	State employee combined charities registration process for organization participation streamlined.	101	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1303	Welti	1165*	Olseen	Meetings by telephone or other electronic means under certain conditions authorized.	110	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1710	Hilty	2226*	Vickerman	Private cemeteries provisions clarified.	115	5/23/2007	8/1/2007
1332	Clark	1075*	Pappas	State Board of Investment required to divest from certain investments related to Sudan.	117	5/23/2007	8/1/2007
144	Hortman	463*	Betzold	Notary public maximum fees increased.	127	vetoed	
1360	Simon	596*	Olson, M.	Data practices duties and classifications clarified, technical changes provided and access and classifications provided.	129	5/24/2007	various
1051	Hilty	1048*	Lourey	Indian Affairs Council membership and other provisions modified.	130	5/25/2007	8/1/2007
1340	Tingelstad	1377*	Rest	State boards and advisory groups governing laws revised.	133	5/25/2007	8/1/2007
2293*	Ozment	2044	Latz	Claims against the state settlement provided relating to corrections.	137	5/24/2007	5/25/2007
1175*	Murphy, M.	962	Prettner Solon	Aircraft facilities state financing modified to allow flexibility in obtaining a new lessee for a facility, and other statutory provisions modified.	138	5/25/2007	8/1/2007
1208*	Mahoney	998	Scheid	Construction code and licensing provisions modified, penalties and enforcement provided, statutes recodified and money appropriated.	140	5/25/2007	various
548*	Simon	471	Betzold	Omnibus state government finance bill.	148	5/25/2007	various
HEALTH							
2090*	Ward	2111	Koering	Backflow prevention in recreational camping areas requirements limited.	24	4/30/2007	8/1/2007
1444	Bigham	1105*	Sieben	Health risk limits and reporting required for certain perfluorochemicals.	37	5/3/2007	5/4/2007
1990	Ruud	1790*	Hann	Adverse health care events reporting provisions modified.	41	5/4/2007	10/7/2007
1442	Slawik	1266*	Pappas	Hospital emergency rooms required to provide emergency contraception, prophylactic antibiotics and information to sexual assault victims.	42	5/4/2007	8/1/2007
918	Norton	555*	Berglin	Essential community provider designation extended.	50	5/8/2007	8/1/2007
297	Huntley	2171*	Berglin	Omnibus health and human services finance bill.	58	vetoed	
633	Sertich	805*	Tomassoni	Health plan coverage for hearing aids requirements modified.	60	5/10/2007	8/1/2007
1287	Davnie	1705*	Sparks	Colorectal screening tests insurance coverage required.	66	5/14/2007	5/15/2007
305	Huntley	238*	Sheran	Freedom to Breathe Act of 2007; secondhand smoke hazard public policy established to protect employees and the general public.	82	5/16/2007	10/1/2007
1582	Norton	1215*	Fischbach	Health department technical changes provided, radioactive material license renewal fee eliminated, radiation-producing equipment fees established, x-ray equipment operation requirements modified.	85	5/18/2007	8/1/2007
1984	Huntley	1959*	Erickson Ropes	County corrections return of unused drugs dispensed by pharmacies authorized.	103	5/21/2007	8/1/2007
1072	Liebling	802*	Koering	Mortuary science provisions modified.	114	5/23/2007	8/1/2007
1074	Ruud	883*	Scheid	Darlene Luther Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act adopted and penalties imposed.	120	5/24/2007	4/1/2008
57	Thao	26*	Marty	Board of Medical Practices' advisory councils expiration dates extended.	123	5/24/2007	various
1409*	Gottwalt	1229	Koering	Well contractor's license provisions modified.	124	5/23/2007	8/1/2007
298	Huntley	184*	Marty	Registered nurses authorized to dispense oral contraceptives in family planning clinics; governmental unit definition expanded; medical assistance reimbursement rates adjustment provided.	139	5/25/2007	8/1/2007

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1078*	Huntley	967	Berglin	Omnibus health and human services finance bill.	147	5/25/2007	various
HIGHER EDUCATION							
797	Rukavina	1989*	Pappas	Omnibus higher education funding bill.	65	vetoed	
1063*	Simon	1051	Pappas	Omnibus higher education finance bill	144	5/30/2007	7/1/2007
HOUSING							
1004*	Davnie	809	Higgins	Predatory mortgage lending practices prohibited.	18	4/20/2007	8/1/2007
931	Mullery	988*	Higgins	Predatory mortgage lending practices prohibited, criminal penalties prescribed and remedies provided.	74	5/14/2007	8/1/2007
211	Zellers	241*	Limmer	Mortgage loan application information sale prohibited, homestead exemptions and judgments involving sale of home- stead property enforcement regulated and real property improvement construction damage actions limited.	105	5/21/2007	various
1209	Mullery	1533*	Pappas	Homeowner transactions regulated relating to homes in foreclosure.	106	5/21/2007	various
1205	Kranz	1196*	Jungbauer	Manufactured home relocation trust fund established, and manufactured home park owner payments required.	141	5/25/2007	various
HUMAN SERVICES							
738	Greiling	322*	Betzold	Civil commitment early intervention services expanded, and definition of chemically dependent person expanded.	69	5/14/2007	8/1/2007
1577	Lesch	1724*	Prettner Solon	Human services licensing and other provisions modified.	112	5/24/2007	various
INDUSTRY							
1300	Juhnke	1069*	Skoe	Motor fuels unavailability notice required, and penalty waiver provided for retailers who do not carry ethanol or biodiesel blends under certain circumstances.	28	4/30/2007	8/1/2007
2045	Atkins	1193*	Johnson	Petroleum products specifications updated and petroleum definitions modified.	62	5/10/2007	various
1958	Atkins	1070*	Pappas	Liquor regulations modified and intoxicating liquor licenses authorized.	89	5/18/2007	8/1/2007
INSURANCE							
448*	Mullery	1912	Senjem	Auto insurance verification mailing program repealed.	22	4/26/2007	various
1865	Poppe	1787*	Latz	Workers' compensation coverage federal exclusions information and report required.	39	5/4/2007	5/5/2007
1712	Masin	744*	Sparks	Rental vehicle insurance coverage regulated.	72	5/14/2007	8/1/2007
772	Paymar	608*	Prettner Solon	Aircraft insurance minimum liability limits increased.	79	5/17/2007	various
1949	Atkins	1542*	Scheid	Insurer conduct regulated in collision cases.	80	5/17/2007	8/1/2007
1892	Atkins	1581*	Scheid	Life insurance continuation coverage regulated, mortality tables authorized to calculate reserves for certain policies, and other insurance provisions modified and regulated.	104	5/21/2007	various
464*	Sertich	276	Betzold	School employee statewide health insurance plan established.	142	vetoed	
LOCAL GOVERNMENT							
935	Scalze	736*	Lynch	Metropolitan Intercounty Association renamed Minnesota Inter-county Association.	6	3/21/2007	3/22/2007
1429	Urdahl	1332*	Dille	Meeker County economic development authority membership increased to nine.	15	3/30/2007	Day following local compliance
1432	Huntley	1133*	Tomassoni	St. Louis County civil service director provisions modified.	17	4/20/2007	4/21/2007
1490*	Beard	1419	Robling	Scott County personnel rules adoption authorized and veterans' preference administration provided.	25	4/30/2007	Upon local approval
1193	Sailer	1098*	Skoe	Beltrami County; county recorder appointment process provided.	26	4/30/2007	Day after local compliance
1105	Laine	1017*	Rest	Charter commission expense limitations increased for specified cities.	27	vetoed	
1872	Thissen	1807*	Larson	Hennepin County conflicts of interest regulated for certain Hennepin Healthcare System personnel.	34	5/3/2007	8/1/2007
269	Howes	124*	Olson, M.	County office vacancy procedures modified.	52	5/9/2007	5/10/2007
905	Scalze	1311*	Lourey	Municipal preventive health services programs authorized.	59	5/10/2007	8/1/2007
1708	Peterson, N.	1509*	Rest	Hennepin County design-build contract provisions modified.	70	5/14/2007	8/1/2007
1919	Marquart	2161*	Prettner Solon	Plats of land provided.	73	5/14/2007	8/1/2007

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756	Doty	585*	Koering	National Register of Historic Places property sale or lease restrictions removed.	75	5/15/2007	5/16/2007
1161	Kohls	1045*	Ortman	Scott County Housing and Redevelopment Authority renamed Scott County Community Development Agency.	78	5/17/2007	Day following local approval
267	Olson	303*	Wergin	Municipal boundary adjustment advisory task force extended.	90	5/21/2007	various
180	Sertich	54*	Tomassoni	Hibbing Area Redevelopment Agency dissolved, and assets and liabilities transferred to the Hibbing Economic Development Authority.	91	5/21/2007	Day following local compliance
531	Beard	547*	Ortman	Scott County library board made advisory to the county board.	97	5/21/2007	Day following local compliance
1141	Emmer	837*	Koch	Hennepin and Wright county boards authorized to initiate a process for the change of county boundaries by resolution.	102	5/21/2007	5/22/2007
1629	Hilstrom	1396*	Wergin	Fair market value determination clarified in certain dedication proceedings.	116	5/23/2007	8/1/2007
1973*	Carlson	1812	Rest	Minneapolis Public Library and Hennepin County library system merger enabled.	121	5/24/2007	Day following local approval filing
2223	Abeler	2043*	Jungbauer	Anoka authorized in its home rule charter to provide the procedure for the appointment of the city housing and redevelopment authority commissioners.	125	5/24/2007	Day following local compliance
METRO AFFAIRS							
881*	Hilstrom	981	Rest	Metropolitan Land Planning Act and related statutes modified and erroneous and obsolete references corrected.	31	vetoed	
882	Hilstrom	1302*	Pappas	Metropolitan livable communities fund provisions modified, nonprofit organization creation and funds use authorized.	113	5/23/2007	5/24/2007
MILITARY							
1594*	Hosch	952	Lynch	National Guard reenlistment bonus program expanded and academic awards provided.	21	4/26/2007	8/1/2007
272*	Haws	699	Skogen	Firearms safety and usage training certificates continuation provided while soldiers and essential employees are engaged in active military service.	51	5/9/2007	5/10/2007
1157	Haws	1675*	Lourey	Minnesota "Support Our Troops" account money uses expanded.	86	5/18/2007	8/1/2007
532*	Winkler	409	Erickson Ropes	Military personnel utility and other contracts regulated, and cancellations authorized.	111	5/23/2007	8/1/2007
RETIREMENT							
163	Huntley	60*	Prettner Solon	Duluth postemployment benefits accounts authorized and money appropriated.	14	3/30/2007	Day following local approval
1978	Murphy, M.	430*	Betzold	Omnibus pension bill.	134	5/25/2007	various
SAFETY							
1008*	Johnson	985	Moua	Child placement background check requirements modified.	8	3/27/2007	8/1/2007
736*	Huntley	636	Metzen	Ambulance service personnel longevity award and incentive program renamed the Cooper/Sams volunteer ambulance program.	11	3/30/2007	8/1/2007
829*	Paymar	650	Higgins	Omnibus public safety finance bill.	54	5/7/2007	various
1704	Tillberry	1464*	Skogen	Motor vehicle collision repair required to include air bag repair or replacement and criminal penalties imposed.	71	5/15/2007	8/1/2007
1824	Faust	1370*	Marty	Amusement rides regulation provisions modified.	95	5/21/2007	1/1/2008
TAXES							
8*	Wollschlaeger	17	Bakk	Tax conformity provided for tax year 2006.	1	1/30/2007	various
2294*	Dill	2003	Bakk	Omnibus tax bill.	81	vetoed	
2268*	Lenczewski	1933	Bakk	Omnibus tax bill.	149	vetoed	
TRANSPORTATION							
539*	Juhnke	600	Gimse	Trunk highway Route No. 145 technical correction provided, and Legislative Route No. 262 removed.	23	4/26/2007	4/27/2007
946*	Lieder	1986	Murphy	Omnibus transportation finance bill.	84	vetoed	
562*	Lieder	360	Murphy	Transportation, Metropolitan Council and public safety funding provided; motor vehicle sales tax provisions modified; Public Safety Department fees increased.	143	5/30/2007	7/1/2007

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MAJORITY LEADER: ANTHONY "TONY" SERTICH

MINORITY LEADER: MARTY SEIFERT

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In 2003 regular session	4,424
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House member per diem	\$76
In 2006	\$66
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Senate member per diem in 2007	\$96
In 2006	\$66
Time lawmakers are scheduled to reconvene Feb. 12, 2008	noon
Days between the May 21 House adjournment and when legislators reconvene	267

Sources: House Public Information Services; Legislature Web site (www.leg.mn); Governor's Log 2007; Journal of the House; Journal of the Senate.

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