

SESSION WEEKLY

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BUDGETING 101
AUTHORS BEHIND BILLS' SPONSORS
THE 'STATE' OF EDUCATION

HF110- HF227

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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Minnesota House of Representatives
Public Information Services
175 State Office Building
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Director

Barry LaGrave

Editor/Assistant Director

Lee Ann Schutz

Assistant Editor

Mike Cook

Art & Production Coordinator

Paul Battaglia

Writers

Nick Busse, Craig Green,
Stephen Harding, Sonja Hegman,
Patty Ostberg, Mia Simpson

Chief Photographer

Tom Olmscheid

Photographers

Andrew VonBank, Sarah Stacke

Staff Assistants

Christy Novak, Joan Bosard

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On the cover: Gov. Tim Pawlenty addresses a joint convention in the House Chamber during his fifth State of the State address on Jan. 17.

—Photo by: Sarah Stacke

Looking at a surplus

Legislature has some financial wiggle room this biennium

By SONJA HEGMAN

Unlike the last biennium, this time around the Legislature gets to decide what to do with an excess of cash.

In addition to assigning dollars to programs funded by the projected \$30-plus billion state budget for the next two fiscal years (running from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009), legislators will decide what to do with a projected \$2.2 billion budget surplus. Broken down, it amounts to \$1.038 billion in the current fiscal year and \$1.132 billion in Fiscal Years 2008-09.

Four years ago, members entered the first year of the biennium with a projected \$4.5 billion deficit.

Surplus vs. sustainable spending

Legislators shouldn't be ready to spend the full amount, however. For the most part, the numbers don't factor in inflation.

In the state's November economic forecast, inflation numbers were provided using the consumer price index. Bill Marx, House chief fiscal analyst, told the House Finance Committee Jan. 8 that if those numbers are factored in for the next biennium, inflation would use up \$990 million of the \$2.2 billion.

"This is not very scientific," Marx said. "That's not the way the budget will be put together."

He added that some areas of the state budget will get inflationary increases; some areas will probably get greater than inflationary increases; and some areas may even be reduced. He said all of that needs to be factored in for more precise numbers.

Legislators have also been warned to be careful in committing the money to programs that would need sustained funding. Marx said there may not be enough funding in Fiscal Years 2010-11 to sustain these programs.

"If inflation was applied to everything, the \$1 billion in 08-09 could not all be permanent or ongoing spending. Some portion would have to be one-time money," Marx said.

He added that how the spending or revenue reductions are done in Fiscal Years 2008-09

will determine how much money will be sustained in Fiscal Years 2010-11.

"That's one for the Legislature to discuss," he said. "The governor will make recommendations on that."

Right now, the current projected surplus in Fiscal Years 2010-11 is nearly \$3.22 billion.

"Say the state is going to spend \$100 million on education in 2008. Then say that amount will double in 2009 to \$200 million. What we carry out in 2010-11 is the second number (\$200 million), which becomes \$400 million. If all the spending is of that pattern, not all of this (surplus) could be sustained," Marx said.

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal), House Finance Committee chairman, said he hopes part of the approximately \$1 billion, if it is available, can be put into the state's reserve account. The other \$1 billion should be permanent or continuing money based on projected economic growth, he said.

In general, it's the General Fund

The General Fund makes up about 60 percent of the total state budget and is funded by state resources, and this is the part of the budget that the Legislature places most of its focus.

General Fund spending is projected to be \$32.4 billion for the upcoming biennium, not including inflationary increases.

"When talking about targets and appropriations we're talking about General Fund appropriations," Marx said. He added that the General Fund numbers are also what the finance committee will spend the most time on. "Those are the parts of the budget with the most flexibility, and the Legislature has the most discretion as far as spending the money."

The General Fund includes revenues from taxes and various fees. The largest revenues, combined at about 75 percent, come from sales and individual income taxes. Other revenues come from places such as the motor vehicle sales taxes, health impact fees, tobacco payments, corporate income taxes and statewide property taxes.

Education receives about 40 percent of the revenues from the General Fund. Health and human services use up about 30 percent, property tax aids and credits use about 10 percent and higher education uses

First Reading continued on page 4

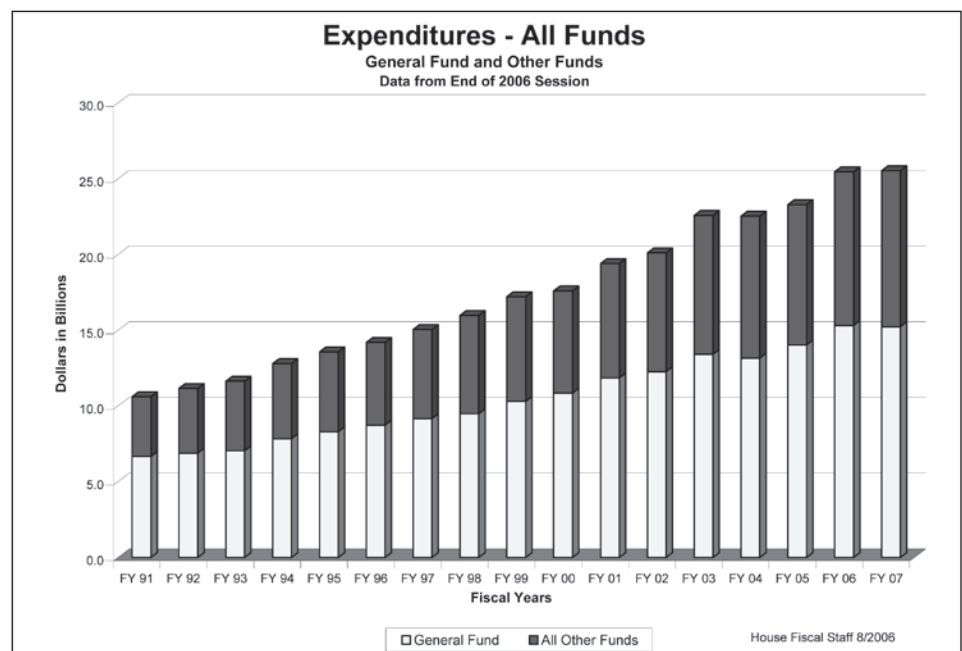


Chart courtesy of House Fiscal Analysis Department

This chart shows spending in all state funds since Fiscal Year 1991.

Crunching the numbers

The first year of the biennium is traditionally reserved for consideration of the state budget. There are two upcoming dates key to the legislative decision-making process as it relates to the budget.

Jan. 22: Gov. Tim Pawlenty is expected to release his budget priorities. During his Jan. 17 State of the State address, he said that if a spending bill is to be signed into law, it will need to clearly define expected results. "We need to stop paying for good intentions and start paying for better performance," he said.

Feb. 28 : The February Economic Forecast, to be released by the Department of Finance, provides the framework with which lawmakers craft their spending proposals. The November forecast projected a surplus for the upcoming biennium of \$2.17 billion.

When released, the budget documents will be available online at the [Minnesota Department of Finance](#).

about 9 percent. Other areas that receive the remainder include agriculture and environment, economic development, public safety, state government, transportation and the paying off of debt service.

All funds

The All Funds budget brings in all other revenues, such as transportation and transit funds and federal funds, which together comprise about 30 percent of the total state budget. Generally, the state's only discretion with federal funds is if it will accept them, Marx said. The Legislature does have the opportunity to review federal funds, which have statutory appropriations attached to them.


Examples of other funds within the All Funds include the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund, Trunk Highway Fund, Environmental Fund, Natural Resources Fund, Game and Fish Fund, Health Care Access Fund, State Government Special Revenue Fund and Special Revenue Fund.

The Special Revenue Fund and the State Government Special Revenue Fund are a conglomeration of about 1,000 accounts of funding, Marx said. Each account within the fund has its own funding source and is spent on a certain purpose

State Government Special Revenue is a specific fund that includes a group of generally health-related accounts. For example, the Board of Pharmacy collects licensing fees and then spends those fees to operate its licensing system.

Much of the spending in these special accounts is statutory appropriations, Marx said. Language in the law says revenue received is appropriated

for a specific purpose. This will stay the same if the Legislature does nothing in a bill, he said. The only way it will change is if the Legislature amends or repeals that appropriation. He added

that some of the appropriations out of these funds are direct appropriations, meaning the Legislature has to appropriate the money every two years. 

Budgeting Glossary

General Fund:

The General Fund is the major source of funding for education, health care and human services and other major functions of state government. Most of the money in this fund is not earmarked for specific purposes. It is the largest fund in the state treasury, into which receipts from most major taxes are deposited.

Budget Reserve or Reserve:

State law establishes a Budget Reserve separate from the Cash Flow Account. The reserve is like a savings account and serves as a hedge against an unforeseen economic downturn. Reserve funds may be spent in the event expenditures are forecasted to exceed revenues, but only after consultation with the Legislative Advisory Commission.

Appropriation

Authorization by the Legislature to spend money from the state treasury for purposes established in law. Appropriation language typically states: "XXX are appropriated to a state agency for a certain purpose." The Minnesota Constitution prohibits payment of money out of the treasury unless au-

thorized by an appropriation.

Statutory (or standing) Appropriation

An appropriation made in statute authorizing the ongoing payment out of the treasury for a program. In contrast to direct appropriations, statutory appropriations need not be renewed every biennium for funding to continue.

Direct Appropriation

An appropriation for a specific amount of money, for use only during a specific time period. Appropriations are usually for a single year of the biennium; however, legislation occasionally makes single year appropriations available either year of the biennium.

Omnibus Bill or Act

A collection of separate bills or appropriations in a single, large bill or act.

Biennium

Minnesota has a two-year (biennial) budget period. The Legislature appropriates the major portion of the biennial budget in the odd-numbered year session, and makes adjust-

ments as needed during the even-numbered years. For example, the 2008-09 biennium is scheduled to begin at 12:01 a.m. July 1, 2007 and end at midnight June 30, 2009.

Forecast

Each year in November and February, the Department of Finance is required to project state revenues and expenditures based on current law. This prediction is the forecast upon which the governor and Legislature base their budget proposals. Within the forecast process, the Department of Revenue is required to forecast revenues to be received by school districts, counties and towns. The Finance Department is also required to submit a debt capacity forecast at the same times as the revenue and expenditure forecast.

Fiscal Year

The 12-month period on which the state's budget is based; it runs from July 1 to June 30. School district fiscal years are the same as the state fiscal year. County and city fiscal years are the same as the calendar year. The federal fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30.

Minnesota State Agencies

Administration	(651) 201-2555	Higher Education Services.....	(651) 642-0567
Agriculture	(651) 201-6550		(800) 657-3866
	(800) 967-2474	Natural Resources.....	(651) 296-6157
Commerce.....	(651) 296-4026		(888) 646-6367
Corrections	(651) 361-7200	Pollution Control Agency.....	(651) 296-6300
Education	(651) 582-8200		(800) 657-3864
Employee Relations.....	(651) 259-3637	Public Safety General Information	(651) 201-7000
Employment and		Driver and Vehicle Services.....	(651) 297-3608
Economic Development	(651) 296-3711	Alcohol and Gambling	
	(800) 657-3858	Enforcement Division.....	(651) 201-7507
Enterprise Technology.....	(651) 296-8885	Division of Homeland Security	
Finance	(651) 201-8000	and Emergency Management	(651) 201-7400
Health	(651) 201-5000	State Duty Officer	
Human Rights.....	(651) 296-5663	(24-Hour Emergency).....	(651) 649-5451
Human Services	(651) 431-2000		(800) 422-0798
Iron Range Resources	(218) 744-7400	State Patrol.....	(651) 201-7100
	(800) 765-5043	Revenue	
Labor and Industry.....	(651) 284-5005	General Information	(651) 296-3403
	(800) 342-5354	Income Tax Helpline	(651) 296-4444/296-3781
Mediation Services.....	(651) 649-5421	Sales and Use Tax Line.....	(651) 296-6181
Metropolitan Council.....	(651) 602-1000	Transportation	(651) 296-3000
Military Affairs.....	(651) 268-8925		(800) 657-3774
Housing Finance Agency	(651) 296-7608	Veterans Affairs	(651) 296-2562
	(800) 657-3769		

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select bills heard in House committees held Jan. 11-18 and other House activity.

CHILDREN

Child care support services

Early child care and education are two of the major issues facing legislators this session. Members of the Early Childhood Learning Finance Division of the House Finance Committee heard background information Jan. 16.

"Child care provides both care and education for children while parents work or attend school," said Deb Swenson-Klatt, manager of the Department of Human Services early childhood development program. "Nearly 700,000 Minnesota children need child care while their parents work."

A recent study found that just 25 percent of Minnesota child care centers were "good quality" on the environmental rating scale. Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) found that disturbing. "What about the other 75 percent?"

"One of the places that child care centers scored lower were health and safety, practices around hand washing and diapering; there are very stringent standards," Swenson-Klatt said. "It's relatively easy for those practices to be fixed; it doesn't cost a lot of money to wash hands."

Katie Williams, director of early childhood programs at the Minneapolis YMCA, said the programs help prepare children for kindergarten and beyond. The programs, which promote social, physical, language and cognitive development, allow children to learn at their own pace.

No long-term study of students that have gone through the program has been conducted, but Williams said anecdotal evidence from teachers in the school system shows that the children come well-prepared.

Help is available for families to prepare their youngest members.

Cherie Kotilinek, manager of the department's child care assistance program, said the program provides assistance for 29,870 children in an average month.

The program's purpose is to provide financial subsidies to help low-income families pay for child care. That way parents may pursue employment or education leading to employment knowing their children are well cared for and getting prepared to enter school.

ENERGY

Harnessing wind power

Up to 25 percent of all electricity used in Minnesota could be reliably generated by wind, according to the results of a new study.

The findings of the [Minnesota Wind Integration Study](#), commissioned by the Legislature in 2005, were presented to the [Energy Finance and Policy Division](#) of the [House Finance Committee](#) Jan. 17. The division took no action.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether Minnesota can integrate, in a reliable and cost-effective manner, its wind-power capacity up to 20 percent of all retail electric energy sales in the state by 2020. The commission studied the feasibility and cost impacts of wind power integration at 15, 20 and 25 percent of total energy consumption.

Ken Wolf, reliability administrator for the [Minnesota Public Utilities Commission](#), said that despite the variability and uncertainty inherent in wind-generated power, the study shows conclusively that wind can effectively be used for up to 25 percent of the state's electricity.

Wolf said the 18-month, \$700,000 study utilized "rigorous" methods and nationally renowned wind-power experts and yielded impeccable results.

"You will not get a reputable source contradicting these numbers. They're solid," Wolf said.

As to the effect on consumers' pocketbooks, Wolf said the overall rate impact depends on the overall volume of wind available to utilize in a given year. Generally, however, the cost would amount to anywhere between \$3.80 and \$13.93 for a consumer whose annual electric bill totaled \$967.61 — which happens to be Wolf's annual electric bill.

ENVIRONMENT

Great Lakes compact

Minnesota could become the first state to sign a Great Lakes water usage compact more than six years in the making, if a bill approved by a House committee becomes law.

[HF110](#), sponsored by [Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth), would enact the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, a proposed agreement between eight states and two Canadian provinces that

would prohibit diversions of water outside of the Great Lakes basins.

The [House Environment and Natural Resources Committee](#) approved the bill Jan. 16. It now goes to the [House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee](#).

The compact is the result of years of negotiations through the Council of Great Lakes Governors, a nonpartisan partnership between the eight Great Lakes states — Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. To become effective, it must be signed into law by the governors of all eight states, ratified by Congress, and then agreed to by the Canadian authorities.

The compact also establishes that the states and Canadian provinces involved would implement conservation and efficiency programs, and use consistent standards to evaluate the environmental and economic impacts of proposed uses of Great Lakes water.

Allison Wolf, legislative director for the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, said that diverting water from the Great Lakes to other areas results in lower water levels, which has a "significant environmental and economic impact."

Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters Director Kent Lokkesmoe said passage of the compact would not result in the need for any new laws in Minnesota, which is already "ahead of all the other Great Lakes states" in terms of Great Lakes water usage legislation.

"This is substantially less restrictive than what Minnesota currently has," Lokkesmoe said, referring to the state's laws governing the usage of water resources.

A companion bill, [SF38](#), sponsored by [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), awaits action by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

GOVERNMENT

Continuing appropriations

Several legislators have introduced bills that would avoid a partial state government shutdown like that of July 2005.

The [House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee](#) approved one measure Jan. 18, and referred it to the [House Finance Committee](#).

Sponsored by [Rep. Diane Loeffler](#)

(DFL-Mpls), [HF7](#) would continue baseline appropriations set in the previous fiscal year for one year, if an appropriations bill is not passed by the Legislature. Addressing continuing appropriations upon a legislative impasse was one of the most popular issues in a survey of House members last session, said Loeffler, who noted that several other states have similar legislation, including Wisconsin and Rhode Island.

Several failed amendments included a set deadline of the first Monday in May of an odd-numbered year in which an appropriations bill must be passed by the Legislature. [Rep. Laura Brod](#) (R-New Prague) said setting time limits instead of continuing funding forces legislators to get their jobs done.

The reason the constitutional deadline is the first Monday after the third Saturday in May is because it takes that amount of time to do the work, countered [Rep. Phyllis Kahn](#) (DFL-Mpls).

A failed amendment offered by [Rep. Sarah Anderson](#) (R-Plymouth) would have limited legislators from receiving per diem living expenses during the time in which continuing appropriations are in effect. The measure would put extra pressure on legislators to come to funding resolutions, she said.

If continuing appropriations were in effect during the following session, legislators would not be able to collect on expenses, noted [Rep. Larry Howes](#) (R-Walker). Because many members come from Greater Minnesota, he couldn't support the amendment, he said.

[Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.](#) (DFL-Winona), the committee chairman, noted the change could give additional power to the governor. If he or she wanted to increase funding appropriations in a year when legislators wanted to decrease the amounts, the governor could simply veto a funding bill thereby allowing for baseline appropriations from the previous year to take effect. He said those issues will be discussed as the bill moves forward.

The bill has no direct Senate companion; however, Sen [David Tomassoni](#) (DFL-Chisholm) has offered a similar proposal, [SF46](#).

HEALTH

Covering all children

Insuring Minnesota's children was at the forefront of the Jan. 16 House Health and Human Services Committee meeting, with discussion of the so-called "Children's Health Security Act."

[Rep. Paul Thissen](#) (DFL-Mpls), committee chairman and sponsor of [HF1](#), called the



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Representing the Minnesota Universal Health Care Coalition, Dr. John T. Garland testifies in support of the so-called "Children's Health Security Act" during the Jan. 16 House Health and Human Services Committee meeting.

proposal a practical path to ensuring that all Minnesota children receive quality health care by, in part, breaking barriers to coverage and simplifying the complex public health care system currently in place.

"We have about 68,000 kids in Minnesota that are lacking health coverage," Thissen said. "I think our state, as much as any other state, can accomplish meaningful coverage for all kids. It's an achievable goal."

The legislation proposes health care coverage for all children in Minnesota through a two-phase process. The first would absorb children whose families earn less than 300 percent of federal poverty guidelines into a public system that would include and combine MinnesotaCare and Medical Assistance, the state's current health care programs. The second proposes the establishment of a bicameral task force to deliberate how best to provide health care for all children, regardless of income. The task force would present its recommendations to the Legislature by January 2009.

The committee took no action on the bill, which has no Senate companion.

Nine testifiers spoke in support of the bill, including representatives from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition.

Denise Herrmann, a school nurse in the

St. Paul School District and a pediatric nurse practitioner, said health care is not only an issue of health, but one of education.

"It's an old cliché, but it's true: healthy kids learn better," she said.

[Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) wondered if a state-funded program could negatively affect the health care industry.

"MinnesotaCare probably pays in the order of 50 percent of what hospitals and providers would like to charge," he said. "And, health plans are probably paying 70 percent of what they would like to charge. If we suddenly take every kid in the state and put them into a plan that's paying less than what it costs to treat those kids, what's that going to do to the health care system?"

HOUSING

Connecting housing to health

At first glance, housing and public health may not seem like complementary subjects. Wrong, says [Rep. Karen Clark](#) (DFL-Mpls), chairwoman of the Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health Finance Division of the House Finance Committee.

"People's housing has a big impact on their health, period," she said, using as examples

lead poisoning, mold, even homelessness.

"Let's say you become homeless and you get bronchitis," she said. "Everything in our life is interconnected."

Clark, who worked as a public health nurse, plans to deliberate these issues this biennium. She also expects the division to work on public health crises including obesity, tobacco use and rogue viruses; accessible and affordable housing; and workforce housing. Clark will also appoint two subcommittees, known loosely as "environmental health" and "healthy housing," to more deeply inspect the union of housing and public health.

"I think it's a fabulous opportunity to see how these two subjects fit together," she said.

Dozens of programs fall under the purview of the division, including those administered by the Housing Finance Agency and nearly all in the Health Department. The division will also direct funding for several programs in the Department of Human Services, the Veterans Home Board and 15 health-related boards.

According to Clark, the division will hear overviews by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and the Department of Health, and review past budgets in upcoming meetings.

"I want to make sure we're not just looking at current budgets, but where we've been before," she said.

METRO AFFAIRS

No commission elimination, yet

The spirit of bipartisanship superseded the desire for elimination at the Jan. 17 House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee meeting.

Instead of voting on HF15, which proposes the elimination of the Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government, Rep. Debra Hilstrom (DFL-Brooklyn Center), the committee chairwoman and bill sponsor, presented it for introduction and discussion only.

Hilstrom said that in the spirit of cooperation on the first bill presented to the committee, "I think that it's important that we keep things in a bipartisan fashion."

Hilstrom testified that the commission, made up of seven members from the House and seven from the Senate, has limited authority that only allows it to provide recommendations. Any reports from the Metropolitan Council, Hilstrom contends, should go to legislative committees with jurisdiction over metropolitan affairs.

"I believe there should be oversight," Hilstrom said, "and (this committee) should do it."

Created in 2001, the commission, which

Hilstrom said has met only twice since 2005, was established to oversee the Metropolitan Council's operating and capital budgets, work programs and capital improvement program. The council, a 17-member panel appointed by the governor, works with local communities to provide efficient growth of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville) and Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) favor keeping the commission intact.

While Holberg suggested that the commission could be more effective if it were given more authority, Buesgens said that he believed the commission helps to shed light on issues important to the metropolitan area.

A companion bill, SF19, sponsored by Sen. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope), awaits action by the full Senate.

TAXES

Lack of tax compliance

Minnesotans are failing to pay more than \$1 billion annually in taxes, according to a tax compliance report issued by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

Released in March 2006, the report was never brought before the House Taxes Committee in any substantive way before its Jan. 17 meeting, said Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington), committee chairwoman. No committee action was taken.

The report focuses on income tax and sales and use taxes, which accounted for 75 percent of state tax revenue in Fiscal Year 2005, said Deborah Parker Junod, project manager. One application of the use tax is its application to purchases from out-of-state vendors, like catalog sales.

"Minnesota does have a tax compliance problem," she said.

In 1999, taxpayers should have paid \$5.7 billion in income taxes, but paid only \$5.1 billion. In 2000, taxpayers should have paid \$4.3 billion in sales and use taxes, but paid only \$3.8 billion.

According to Junod, taxes owed have increased by about 8 percent per year since Fiscal Year 2000.

For the income tax gap, most people file but underreport their income, Junod said. Most of that comes from the self-employed, accounting for \$475 million in underpaid tax liabilities. Another \$124 million is from people who didn't file a return at all.

For the sales and use tax gap, people and businesses who did not pay the use tax accounted for about \$272 million in delinquencies. Businesses that didn't collect and remit the sales

tax accounted for \$180 million.

"It's neither feasible nor desirable to collect that entire amount," Junod said. Rather, the goal is to close the gap over time.

To encourage long-term voluntary compliance, Junod said the Department of Revenue educates and assists taxpayers to help them comply voluntarily, identifies those who may be noncompliant, audits tax returns, collects payments due and tries to develop ways to simplify the tax system.

Junod said some taxpayers know they owe taxes and reported such on their tax returns, but just don't pay them.

TECHNOLOGY

U stumps for bioscience funding

Officials from the University of Minnesota made their pitch for increased state funding for bioscience to the [House Biosciences and Emerging Technology Committee](#) Jan. 16 and 17.

Frank Cerra, senior vice president for health sciences at the university's Academic Health Center, said that the university is being "out-invested" by competing schools.

Cerra said the state needs to invest in new bioscience research facilities in order for the university to be able to attract and retain top-notch faculty and maintain its status as a leader in the field.

"If we want to sustain our growth and grow as an area for biotechnology, we need investment now," he said.

University Vice President for Research Tim Mulcahy echoed that sentiment, citing aggressive competition from schools like the University of California, San Francisco, which is currently in the process of constructing a 2.65 million square-foot biomedical research facility.

"We need state of the art facilities," Mulcahy said, adding that faculty salaries at the university are not competitive with those of its peer institutions.

Touting the economic benefits of bioscience research to the state, Mulcahy stressed the university's successful partnerships with the private sector, and said such partnerships are essential to keeping biotech companies in Minnesota.

Cerra said some of the more direct positive impacts of bioscience research and development could be new treatments for Alzheimer's disease and compulsive gambling and a cure for diabetes.

"This is what we can do if we have the investment," he said.

The committee took no action.

2007-08 Minnesota House of Representatives

District	Member/Party	Room*	Phone (651) 296-	District	Member/Party	Room*	Phone (651) 296-
48B	Abeler, Jim (R)	203	1729	40B	Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)	509	4218
19A	Anderson, Bruce (R)	201	5063	66A	Lesch, John (DFL)	537	4224
43A	Anderson, Sarah (R)	229	5511	30A	Liebling, Tina (DFL)	393	0573
3A	Anzelc, Tom (DFL)	417	4936	1B	Lieder, Bernard (DFL)	423	5091
39B	Atkins, Joe (DFL)	503	4192	55A	Lillie, Leon (DFL)	353	1188
35A	Beard, Michael (R)	207	8872	59A	Loeffler, Diane (DFL)	349	4219
43B	Benson, John (DFL)	517	9934	37A	Madore, Shelley (DFL)	507	5506
33B	Berns, John (R)	311	4315	22A	Magnus, Doug (R)	217	5505
57A	Bigham, Karla (DFL)	529	4342	67A	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	591	4277
25B	Bly, David (DFL)	557	7065	65B	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	563	9714
25A	Brod, Laura (R)	321	4229	9B	Marquart, Paul (DFL)	597	6829
27A	Brown, Robin (DFL)	337	8216	38A	Masin, Sandra (DFL)	527	3533
23B	Brynaert, Kathy (DFL)	421	3248	53B	McFarlane, Carol (R)	223	5363
35B	Buesgens, Mark (R)	307	5185	57B	McNamara, Denny (R)	271	3135
56A	Bunn, Julie (DFL)	521	4244	4A	Moe, Frank (DFL)	369	5516
45B	Carlson, Lyndon (DFL)	479	4255	40A	Morgan, Will (DFL)	531	4212
61A	Clark, Karen (DFL)	471	0294	23A	Morrow, Terry (DFL)	415	8634
24B	Cornish, Tony (R)	281	4240	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	367	4262
62A	Davnie, Jim (DFL)	545	0173	64A	Murphy, Erin (DFL)	413	8799
52B	Dean, Matt (R)	327	3018	6B	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	343	2676
49A	DeLaForest, Chris (R)	323	4231	46A	Nelson, Michael V. (DFL)	569	3751
29A	Demmer, Randy (R)	225	9236	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	277	4946
52A	Dettmer, Bob (R)	329	4124	29B	Norton, Kim (DFL)	387	9249
6A	Dill, David (DFL)	571	2190	1A	Olin, Dave (DFL)	593	9635
47A	Dittrich, Denise (DFL)	371	5513	16B	Olson, Mark (R)	301	4237
58B	Dominguez, Augustine "Willie" (DFL)	539	8659	11B	Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)	445	3201
12B	Doty, Al (DFL)	433	4247	37B	Ozment, Dennis (R)	283	4306
17A	Eastlund, Rob (R)	243	5364	42B	Paulsen, Erik (R)	309	7449
2A	Eken, Kent (DFL)	575	9918	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	543	4199
19B	Emmer, Tom (R)	261	4336	31A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	491	8637
41A	Erhardt, Ron (R)	245	4363	32A	Peppin, Joyce (R)	331	7806
16A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	279	6746	20A	Peterson, Aaron (DFL)	451	4228
8B	Faust, Tim (DFL)	567	0518	41B	Peterson, Neil W. (R)	213	7803
21B	Finstad, Brad (R)	251	9303	45A	Peterson, Sandra (DFL)	345	4176
26B	Fritz, Patti (DFL)	551	8237	27B	Poppe, Jeanne (DFL)	487	4193
53A	Gardner, Paul (DFL)	581	2907	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	477	0170
36B	Garofalo, Pat (R)	221	1069	26A	Ruth, Connie (R)	291	5368
15A	Gottwalt, Steve (R)	231	6316	42A	Ruud, Maria (DFL)	515	3964
54A	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	381	5387	2B	Sailer, Brita (DFL)	577	4265
24A	Gunther, Bob (R)	289	3240	54B	Scalze, Bev (DFL)	357	7153
48A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	209	2439	21A	Seifert, Marty (R)	267	5374
22B	Hamilton, Rod (R)	215	5373	5B	Sertich, Anthony "Tony" (DFL)	459	0172
39A	Hansen, Rick (DFL)	401	6828	14A	Severson, Dan (R)	233	7808
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	453	3824	18A	Shimanski, Ron (R)	227	1534
15B	Haws, Larry (DFL)	473	6612	44A	Simon, Steve (DFL)	375	9889
13A	Heidgerken, Bud (R)	237	4317	10B	Simpson, Dean (R)	295	4293
46B	Hilstrom, Debra (DFL)	379	3709	55B	Slawik, Nora (DFL)	403	7807
8A	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	559	4308	63B	Slocum, Linda (DFL)	523	7158
36A	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	303	6926	33A	Smith, Steve (R)	253	9188
34B	Hoppe, Joe (R)	317	5066	3B	Solberg, Loren (DFL)	443	2365
60B	Hornstein, Frank (DFL)	437	9281	28B	Sviggum, Steve (R)	247	2273
47B	Hortman, Melissa (DFL)	377	4280	56B	Swails, Marsha (DFL)	409	1147
14B	Hosch, Larry (DFL)	565	4373	65A	Thao, Cy (DFL)	359	5158
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	287	2451	63A	Thissen, Paul (DFL)	351	5375
7A	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	585	2228	51B	Tillberry, Tom (DFL)	501	5510
7B	Jaros, Mike (DFL)	583	4246	49B	Tingelstad, Kathy (R)	255	5369
67B	Johnson, Sheldon (DFL)	549	4201	31B	Tschumper, Ken (DFL)	431	9278
13B	Juhnke, Al (DFL)	485	6206	18B	Urdahl, Dean (R)	239	4344
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	365	4257	62B	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	449	4200
17B	Kalin, Jeremy (DFL)	579	5377	61B	Walker, Neva (DFL)	553	7152
60A	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)	463	0171	12A	Ward, John (DFL)	533	4333
50B	Knuth, Kate (DFL)	429	0141	38B	Wardlow, Lynn (R)	241	4128
20B	Koenen, Lyle (DFL)	439	4346	30B	Welti, Andy (DFL)	389	4378
34A	Kohls, Paul (R)	313	4282	11A	Westrom, Torrey (R)	273	4929
51A	Kranz, Scott (DFL)	411	4226	44B	Winkler, Ryan (DFL)	525	7026
50A	Laine, Carolyn (DFL)	407	4331	28A	Wollschlager, Sandy (DFL)	335	8635
9A	Lanning, Morrie (R)	259	5515	32B	Zellers, Kurt (R)	315	5502

*All rooms are in the State Office Building unless otherwise noted, St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

Forging ahead

Pawlenty stresses education reform in State of the State

By Nick Busse

A slew of education reforms, including dramatic changes to the state's high schools, topped Gov. Tim Pawlenty's legislative wish list in his annual [State of the State address](#) Jan. 17.

"American high schools are obsolete," Pawlenty declared, proposing a new high school structure that emphasizes college-level coursework, work-based learning and internships.

Also on Pawlenty's agenda for the session: a comprehensive renewable energy plan, improved health care access and cost containment measures, increased government accountability to taxpayers, and a veterans and military benefits package.

"The state of our state is great, but we can make Minnesota even better," Pawlenty said, echoing sentiments expressed in his previous State of the State speeches.

But Pawlenty delivered this address, his fifth, against the backdrop of a new political landscape. With the DFL now firmly in control of both chambers of the Legislature,

Pawlenty stressed the need for bipartisan cooperation — but made it clear he would resist any attempt to raise taxes.

"I've said it before and I'll say it again: Minnesotans are not under-taxed," he said.

Citing an estimated \$2 billion budget surplus, Pawlenty urged lawmakers to pass tax relief legislation for property owners, veterans and others. Specifically, he advocated a cap on property taxes for local units of government — an idea that many Democrats have already rejected.

Education

Pawlenty spoke at length about the need for improvements to the state's education system.

In his budget proposal, scheduled for release Jan. 22, Pawlenty said he will include a general funding increase of 2 percent per year, per school district, for the next two years. In addition, he said he will offer a 2 percent per year "performance bonus" for those districts that earn a three-star rating on their Minnesota School Report Cards.

For secondary education, Pawlenty called for the creation of what he calls "3R" high schools — for "rigor," "relevance" and "results" — and proposed \$75 million in pay-for-performance funding for the initiative. Under the plan, "3R" students would be required to complete a full year of college while in high school.

Pawlenty's other proposed school reforms include:

- new funding for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs;
- funding for schools to help put a focus on science, technology, engineering and math;
- increased opportunities for online learning;
- tougher math standards for all students;
- individual graduation plans for students in eighth grade and above; and
- a requirement that all students complete four years of a foreign language in order to graduate from high school.

Pawlenty rejected Democrats' call for all-day kindergarten, calling it "enormously expensive." Instead, he proposed an "early childhood scholarship program" that would provide up to \$4,000 for "at-risk" students to attend a kindergarten readiness program of the parents' choice.

Health Care

On the issue of health care, Pawlenty advocated a comprehensive approach that simultaneously focuses on "improving access, improving quality and containing costs."

As a start, he proposed expanding health care coverage to all children under age 21 with a household income of \$60,000 or less for a family of four. He also proposed modernizing MinnesotaCare in such a way as to allow for increased consumer choice and provider competition.

"While market approaches may not work for all medical procedures, we know that engaged, motivated consumers are a powerful force in controlling cost, especially when price and quality measurements are easily understood," Pawlenty said.

In addition, Pawlenty said any health care reform package this year should include:

- creation of an "interoperable electronic medical record system;"
- an overhaul of the state's mental health system;



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Gov. Tim Pawlenty delivers his State of the State address in the House Chamber.

State of State continued on page 23

A costly construction

Renovating and upgrading the State Capitol

By PATTY OSTBERG

Most people would think twice about investing in a home if they saw a for sale brochure that read:

“Beautiful house with marble floors, six types of native Minnesota stone used throughout the building’s construction, antiques include furniture and original Civil War paintings and murals. Interior modifications needed to meet state code requirements including upgrades and repairs to heating and mechanical systems, air conditioning infrastructure; accessibility requirements; safety and security systems upgrades; communication and technology upgrade; and extensive repairs needed due to water damage.”

While the State Capitol building stands as a beautiful mark in time, behind the Civil War paintings, flags and murals are grossly deteriorating arteries. And according to a pre-design renovation plan for the State House, the investment needed could total an estimated \$260 million.

The State Government Finance Division of the House Finance Committee embarked on

a nooks and crannies walking tour Jan. 16 to see firsthand the proposed renovation areas.

Into the underbelly

As legislators and staff climbed metal stairs going over a fire pump, further down the narrow walkway were the main fire control panels to the building. In case of a crisis or fire emergency, a person would have to scramble

over the metal stairs to get to the end of the walkway to shut off the valves, said Michael Bjornberg, principal project manager with Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, the firm that created the renovation plan.

The group continued to wind through the building’s underbelly, restrictive walkways and enclosed mechanical spaces revealing the most recent fixes from the 1960s and 1980s.

While emergency repairs such as new supply fans, coils and filters have been made, many infrastructure elements are still in their old casings. The dated infrastructure can’t supply sufficient quantities of air for Capitol spaces to meet outdoor air requirements or state codes to meet health issues.

Bjornberg said water infiltration is the “No. 1 enemy” of any old building. The Capitol is no different.

As the group made its way into a small retired judicial dining area near the Rathskeller Cafe, the effects of water damage are apparent as water drops stained an outdoor-themed oil painting spanning a lighted inset.

Security concerns

With thousands of visitors every year, from school groups to international travelers, building security would also be addressed in the renovation.

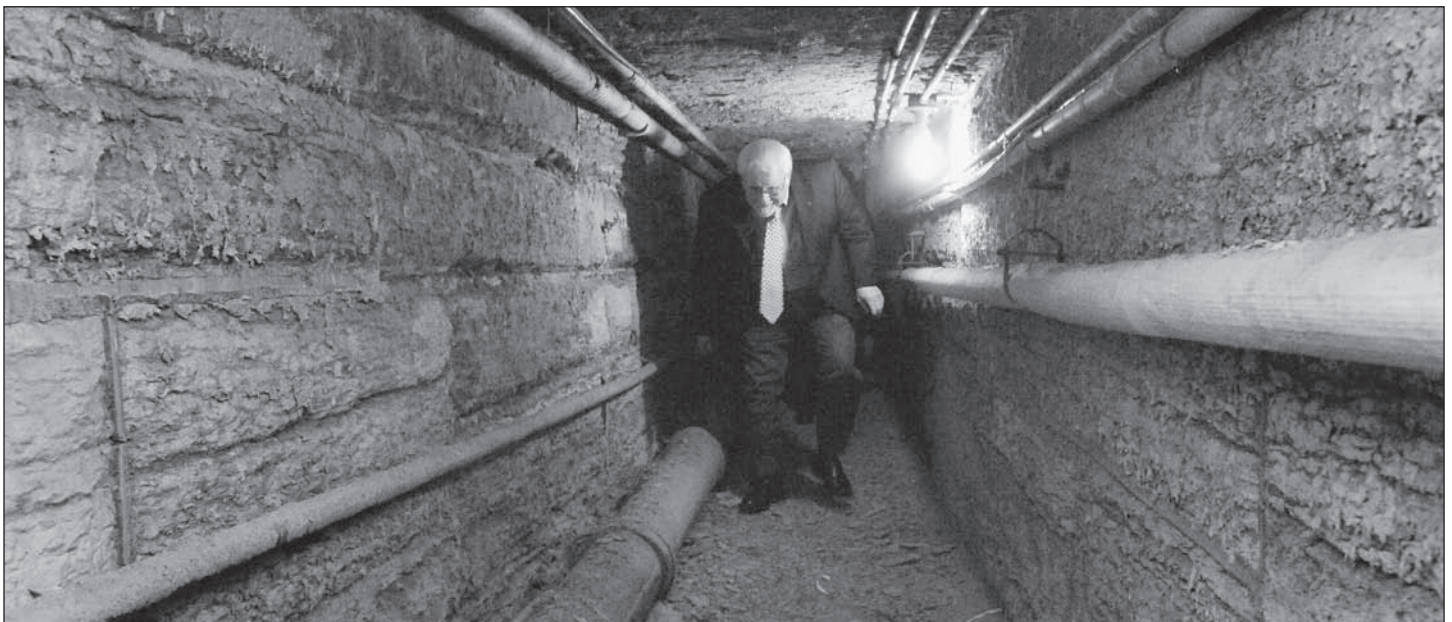


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Bill Hilty and members of the State Government Finance Division of the House Finance Committee squeeze single-file through a subterranean chamber in the bowels of the Capitol during a Jan. 16 tour of proposed Capitol renovation projects.

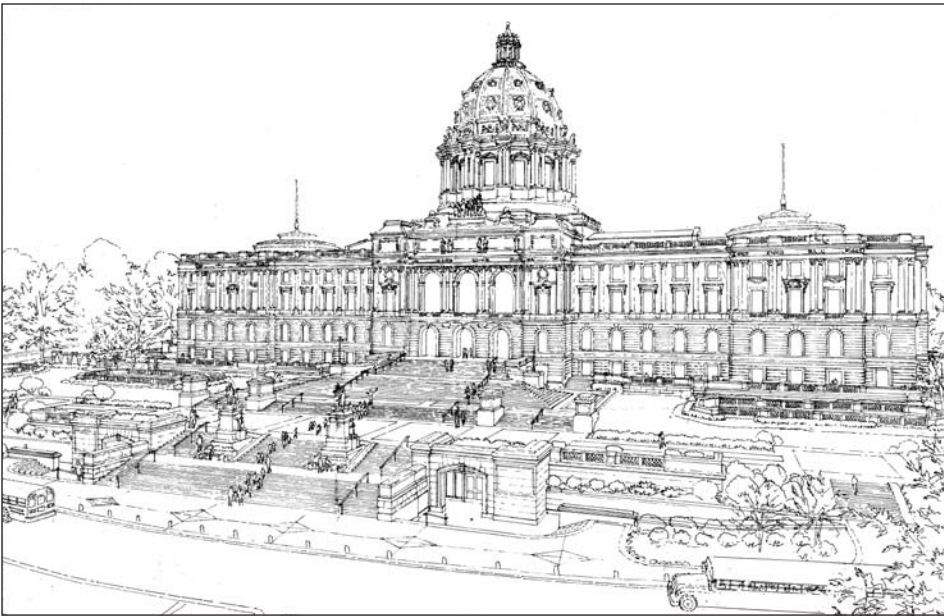


Image courtesy of the Hammel, Green and Abrahamson

A rendering of the Capitol renovation after construction. Note the visitor center entrance below the front steps.

An examination for the Department of Homeland Defense by the Minnesota National Guard found concerns, including pipes and telecommunications wiring systems that are fully exposed along the ceiling of the portion of the Capitol Complex tunnel system that runs through the building.

Concern was also expressed that vehicles can now pull up to the Capitol without any security protections. Cars, trucks and delivery vehicles can also park near the air ventilation system that is intended to pump fresh air into building spaces.

The fixes

The pre-design plan uses a concept called “found space,” in which underutilized areas are converted into efficient and productive “people” space.

One potential addition is a new visitor welcome center where visitors could be greeted and given an orientation of the building. This would also include rest rooms and a gift shop.

This center would be located in the front of the building, and would also serve as a

Other states’ capitol renovations

As the nation’s state capitols age, so do the interior and exteriors of the buildings.

Because they must function on a daily basis, several states are addressing the technological and engineering restoration needs with costs ranging into several hundred million dollars.

A \$287 million restoration of the Texas State Capitol, completed in 1993, included entirely new plumbing, electrical, fire protection and communications systems, water-conserving irrigation and handicap accessible walkways.

A three-year renovation of the Virginia State Capitol is scheduled to be completed in April for \$83 million. According to its Web site, “the renovated Capitol will have new mechanical and electrical systems; a new roof, elevators, stairwells, and legislative meeting space; full accessibility for the disabled; the original 1908 color schemes and décor in the legislative chambers and rotunda; restored original Jeffersonian millwork; and a 27,000 square foot underground extension providing additional work space, a new secure visitor entrance ... and a visitor center with educational and museum exhibits.”

Other recent renovations and their costs:

- Utah — currently underway, \$210 million
- Kansas — currently underway, \$162 million
- Wisconsin — completed in 2001, \$145 million
- Ohio — completed in 1996, \$129 million
- Michigan — completed in 1992, \$58 million

security checkpoint for all visitors coming into the building, according to the plan.

Security changes would place the underground tunnel’s exposed pipes in secure vaults, along with mechanical and electrical components. Where those mechanical and electrical spaces are currently located, underground space would be reconstructed into offices or usable space and lit with natural light through light wells.

Under the plan, Senate hearing rooms would be expanded, as would office space so that all Senate employees could be housed in the building. Now, Republican senators and their staff are in the State Office Building.

A 500-seat auditorium would be constructed for multi-purpose use, including use as temporary legislative chambers during the restoration process.

The plan calls for renovation to occur in three phases, starting after the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, with completion in late-2014 or early-2015. Although no funding plans have been introduced, the pre-design plan suggests some funding be allocated during the 2007 session, so work could begin by 2008. 🏛️



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Michael Bjornberg, principal project manager, shows members of the State Government Finance Division of the House Finance Committee the depths of the Capitol once used for civil defense storage during a Jan. 16 tour of needed building renovations.

After a bonding year

Projects and scopes can change, sort of

By PATTY OSTBERG

What happened to the nearly \$1 billion in capital investments passed into law in the 2005 and 2006 sessions?

The answer is not clear.

The Department of Finance keeps track of bonded money and the financing of department projects, but tracking specific projects can also be in the hands of individual agencies and departments, said Assistant Commissioner of Finance Peter Sausen.

Of the \$930.8 million in bonds authorized last year, the Finance Department reports that \$45.9 million has been spent on a variety of projects as of Jan. 10, 2007.

For example, the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system have spent a combined \$12 million on asset preservation and replacement projects. A total of \$5.6 million has been spent on bridge bonds, but to find the specific amounts for each project one would have to contact the Department of Transportation.

Completing a project

In order to sell bonds for project funding, the Finance Department gathers information from agencies to determine how much approved bonded money they are expecting for cash flow in the next year. With that in mind, the department enters the bond market to sell, hopefully on a good day with low interest rates, said Sausen.

Two sales, totaling \$435 million, were completed last fall. Breaking it into two sales protects the state from a bad market day,

Sausen said. Those bond issue statements are available online and specifically list projects and monies for agencies and organizations.

When it comes to constructing buildings, it can take up to a year after money is bonded to complete the building preparation and design phase, and a second year for construction to actually begin. The process can take years to come to fruition, depending on the intricacies of the project.

For example, in 2003 the Legislature approved a \$25 million grant for the new Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. The grant money can be traced to a July 22, 2003, bond sale. The new theater opened in July 2006.

What if the project scope changes?

Set in Minnesota law is a four-year window in which the money must be used. Changes to previous bonding requests must be approved by a supermajority of the Legislature. Sometimes projects don't begin right away, but the entity still wants to use

Of the \$930.8 million in bonds authorized last year, the Finance Department reports that \$45.9 million has been spent on projects as of Jan. 10, 2007.

the appropriation for its intended purpose, or a slight change in authority of the funds is needed. Those changes can be made in bonding law in following years.

For example, several changes were made in 2005 for projects that were originally bonded for in the previous eight years. An appropriation to the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission for athletic fields in Blaine and to develop a children's golf course that was in the 1998 law was once again approved. An appropriation to the city of Two Harbors for the harbor of refuge and marina was extended for use until June 2006. The project was first bonded for in 2000.

What if the project is cancelled?

A report is required Jan. 1 of every odd-numbered year on the cancellation of General Fund and bond-financed projects authorized more than four years prior to that date.

Bonding continued on page 23



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Many projects take years to come to fruition after a bonding proposal has been approved. A July 22, 2003 bond sale raised revenue for the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. The new theater opened in July 2006.

From ideas to law

The authors' words provide substance for the bill's sponsors

By CRAIG GREEN

All laws start out as ideas. In Minnesota, a bill is an idea for a new law, a change or repeal of a current law, or an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution.

Nearly 6,300 House and Senate files were introduced in the last biennium, and members have started the introduction process for this biennium. On the second day of session, 67 bills were offered by House members for consideration. Twenty bills were offered in the Senate. As of Jan. 18, House and Senate members have introduced a combined 381 bills.

The subjects covered by the first bills include children's health care, property tax relief, education funding, cell phone usage while driving a motor vehicle, naming a highway after Walter Mondale and a request to designate a trail for all-terrain vehicle use.

Yet, before the bills hit the floor, they had to be written. Research was done, drafts were written and language, punctuation, grammar and references were double-checked. Someone, or some group, sat down to begin writing what would be offered for consideration.

But who did it? Who actually wrote the bills?

Officially, anyone can write a draft of a bill: legislators, private citizens, lobbyists or citizen-action groups. There is no statutory requirement or restrictions for producing language for a bill. But the reality is that it takes a firm grasp of legislative law, legal terminology and experience to properly craft a bill. That being the case, most of the bills considered at the House and Senate are initially drafted by a select group of staff who understand the ins and outs of the language of bills. You can find many of these writers in a trio of nonpartisan offices, the House Research Department, the Senate Counsel, Research and Fiscal Analysis Office and the Office of the Revisor of Statutes.

"We've started drafts with material from the back of an envelope, or it may come in as an idea on a phone message and we'll turn it into legislative language," said Patrick



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Revisor of Statutes Michele Timmons and the Minnesota Revisor's Manual with Styles and Forms.

McCormack, director of the House Research Department. "Our job is to ask, 'What's your intent?' and then try to make it clear."

Working with a nonpartisan staff of attorneys, policy experts and administrative staff trained in word processing, editing and document production, McCormack said that every bill can differ in its needs. Sometimes there will be requests to start bills from scratch; some bills will simply be revisions to bills that were submitted during a previous session; and some bills will require multiple meetings with the sponsor of the bill, multiple drafts of the document and a team of staff.

"Words of the law tend to be driven by the tools of the trade, the ways to write legal language, but there is often no one way, a right way, to put it down on a piece of paper," said McCormack. "In many cases, we're just starting it out."

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also works with legislators and others preparing

"A drafter should draft a bill with knowledge of its legal context and the probable relationship of the old law with the new provision. A drafter should draft a bill with knowledge of the constitutional, statutory, and common law principles on the construction of statutes,"

— (Minnesota Revisor's Manual with Styles and Forms, p. 33)

and producing bills. Revisor Michele Timmons said that her office can also receive ideas for new bills from legislators that are written on the back of a napkin, while other bills come in fully drafted.


In addition to drafting, once a bill is completed and ready to be introduced in the House, the revisor's office gives the bill a number and prepares the companion bill for the Senate, if the bill also has a Senate sponsor. Both of the completed bills are then presented to the individual sponsors.

What makes the office even more unique is that they perform the final review of each bill before it is introduced into the House or Senate. The reason for this, said Timmons, is to check and control the quality of the legislative materials.

Striving for perfection can produce some stress-filled days, especially later in session when omnibus bills — usually a compilation of many other bills — are being put together.

Timmons, who spent 18 years working with Ramsey County as civil legal counsel to the county board and as the director of risk management, said, "There's a tension when you're trying to draft legal material, because you want the language to be as plain as it can be and understandable. But you also have to make it accurate. Sometimes there's a real tension when you're trying to convey very complex ideas."

The office is also responsible for several publications.

One is the *Minnesota Revisor's Manual with Styles and Forms*, a detailed guide for drafting legislation and giving an understanding of writing; *Laws of Minnesota* contains the laws and resolutions passed each legislative session; *Minnesota Statutes* contains the codified general and permanent laws; and *Minnesota Rules* contains the compiled administrative rules adopted by state agencies. 

How a Bill Becomes

Idea

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

Legal form

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

Authors

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

General Register

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

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

Calendar for the Day

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

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

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



a Law in Minnesota

Introduction

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

Committee

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

Floor

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

Conference

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

Floor

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

Governor

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



From beginning to end

Tracking bills is just a mouse click away

Whether you follow a number of bills or just a few, you don't have to physically be at the Capitol to track legislation. Through the Legislature's Web site (www.leg.mn), there are several ways to follow a bill from your computer.

Personalized tracking

The MyBills service allows a user to personalize bill tracking for current legislation, and be notified by e-mail of the bill's movement through the process.

Beginning at the Legislature's main page, click "Bill Search, Status and MyBills." Once on the bill search page look for the "MyBills" tag located along the left sidebar. This will take you to the "MyBills" subscription page. Once there, just follow the instructions, which include establishing a username and password. Once that is established you can:

- Receive an RSS feed of bills in your account;
- Add House and Senate bills to your list by bill number, subject or author;
- View the legislative status of your bills, with items with significant current action highlighted;
- Modify your list at any time; and
- Receive daily updates.

Bills, bills and more bills

Information about any bill that has been introduced since 1993 is accessible through the Web.

Begin at www.leg.mn and click on "Bill Search, Status and MyBills." This will take you to a page where you can enter a House or Senate file number, which is used to identify a bill in the House or Senate, the name of the chief sponsor in either body, a committee of origin topic, or a keyword description.

Once the search criteria is entered, the "bill status summary" page gives a short version of what the bill is about, and provides links to the status, full text or summary of a bill from the nonpartisan House Research Department. The status area shows the process of a bill from

its introduction, through the committee and floor process to gubernatorial action.

Tools to help with your search

You don't have to know a bill's number or even the chief sponsor to find information on legislation you are interested in.

There are several features on the Legislature's Web site to help you determine a bill's number and sponsors in both the House and Senate.

On the main bill tracking search page, there is a section at the top for House and Senate bills. Choose either link and you will be directed to an Internet form providing a number of options.

Information by phone

For those who do not have access to a computer, bill information is just a phone call away. Contact the House Index Department at (651) 296-6646. Also, if you're looking for information on the Internet, and you're not sure where to find it, contact House Public Information Services at (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550.

deals with several topics, and the topic you are interested in will be a part of another larger bill.

- House Author Search: this option allows you to see all the bills a particular member has sponsored. It is handy when you know a certain representative has sponsored a bill, but you're not sure of its number or status.
- House Committee Search: sometimes all you might know about a bill is that a particular House committee is hearing the bill. This search option allows you to see all the bills

Through the MyBills Web page on the Legislature's Web site you can personalize bill tracking

If you are unsure about the best way to proceed, click the Help button and be directed to the Examples and Explanations page. The page features an explanation of how to search for bills that have been passed or are still in the legislative process.

Near the top of the main bill status page are four links to four different searches.

- House Topic Search: this search allows you to find bills according to the major topic area that it falls into. In some cases, a bill

initially referred to a committee.

- House Action Search: this link offers dozens of possible status actions for bills in the House. This may also be handy if you are trying to determine whether a committee has reported on a certain bill or if you think a bill was acted upon on a certain day, but you're not sure of any other information.

One on one

Art teacher looks to paint good picture for constituents

By MIA SIMPSON

Rep. Robin Brown (DFL-Austin) said she knocked on approximately 9,000 doors during her campaign for a simple reason: She wanted



Rep. Robin Brown

to get to know voters one-on-one.

"When I talk about knowing the district, I mean that I know the stories of my district," she said. "I know what they want, and it's basically what everyone

wants: to have a good job and be able to raise a family and to live in a safe community."

Up until recently, Brown had never considered an election run. Her husband, Joe, served as a state representative in Iowa, their home state, in the 1980s before they married, which made politics common conversation,

but not necessarily a quest for her. Brown credits several factors – grown children, shifting national politics and a passion for education – as the impetus to her decision to run for a seat in the House.

"I still haven't gotten it down to a 30-second sound-bite," she said. "I just thought, 'You know, I can do that.'"

One of seven children in a farming family, Brown spent her childhood riding horses before entering Minnesota State University, Mankato to major in art education. After working nine years as a teacher, she enrolled in a master's degree program in education at St. Mary's University, where she graduated last year.

For the last five years, Brown has taught art and photography at Albert Lea High School. She's also an artist herself. The artwork – paintings of horses in vibrant tones of blue, black and red – around her sparsely-decorated

DISTRICT 27A

2002 population: 36,705
Largest city: Albert Lea
Counties: Freeborn, Mower
Top concern: Education

office is hers. Brown appears introverted, quiet and thoughtful — though she professes that she experienced a metamorphosis of sorts while campaigning.

"I learned that I am much stronger than I thought I was," she said. "I don't have to be the shy, quiet person I always was. ... There's not much to be afraid of."

Brown said she'll focus on education this session, as well as other issues relevant to her district, including agriculture and taxes. She'll also hold fast to advice her husband gave her as she took her oath to office. "He said, 'Take care of your constituents,'" she said. "I want to represent them in a way that makes them proud."

Continuing on her path

Brynaert moves from school board to statehouse

By SONJA HEGMAN

The day Rep. Kathy Brynaert (DFL-Mankato) walked her daughter to a school playground in Mankato is the day she started her path of public service.



Rep. Kathy Brynaert

Noticing a large number of children and just one supervisor, Brynaert decided she'd organize a playground program and include nine games the children could play. From there,

Brynaert served on the Mankato School Board for 11 years and helped start several youth programs, including a health organization aimed at preventing teen pregnancy.

Her decision to run for state representative came after a lot of nudging from family, friends and Rep. John Dorn, who represented the area for 20 years before choosing not

to seek re-election. Instead, he served as Brynaert's campaign co-chair.

She worried about campaigning because it was a bit too "egocentric" for her. She had served only in nonpartisan roles and never had to pose for pictures or be in the limelight.

"I believe in democracy," she said. "I'm always talking to students and saying they need to step up to the plate. I can't talk to young people about courage and not have courage myself."

Originally from Detroit, Brynaert calls herself a "city kid" who was not ready for Mankato. She and her husband, Tony Filipovitch, arrived there from Tulsa, Okla. in 1978 when Filipovitch, a Chicago native, was offered a job teaching in the Urban Studies program at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

"Our first day there we walked around the downtown, twice," she said. "We looked at each other and said, 'In two years we're outta here.'"

DISTRICT 23B

2002 population: 36,492
Largest city: Mankato
Counties: Blue Earth, Nicollet
Top concern: Education funding

Though the job of representative is new for her, Brynaert said the most difficult part of the job will be living alone because she is renting an apartment for the session and her husband will not be joining her here.

"I've never lived alone in my life," she said, nonchalantly mentioning she was a nun in a convent for a couple of years in her early 20s.

After attending classes at the College of St. Teresa, in Winona, for a year, Brynaert decided to join the Franciscan convent in Rochester affiliated with the college as a way to come to terms with issues she was facing in her life. Brynaert left the convent because she "matured through her issues" and returned to the college where she received her bachelor's degree in philosophy.

Serving in a new role

Former coach wants to continue helping community

By CRAIG GREEN

For as long as he can remember, service has always been important to Rep. Bob Dettmer (R-Forest Lake).



Rep. Bob Dettmer

After graduating from Bemidji State University in 1973, Dettmer took his first teaching job at Forest Lake Area High School, and it's where he has taught for the last 34 years. In addition to teaching outdoor education and weight training, Dettmer has coached track and soccer. He also became a state-ranked wrestling coach, leading his teams to more than 350 wins.

As a chief warrant officer in the U.S. Army Reserves, Dettmer was called to active duty shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks, first serving at Fort Gordon in Georgia, and later Kuwait and Iraq.

This was Dettmer's first run for public office, and he won his district with 55 percent of the vote. He replaces former Rep. Ray Vandever, who won a seat in the Minnesota Senate.

Representing a district that supports conservative values, Dettmer is pro-life and wants to work on "keeping a lid on taxes." He knows that his opinions may meet resistance. "As a conservative, I know there are issues that I will have to deal with which I may not agree," said Dettmer. "But my values, my foundation, will help me deal with these issues."

Dettmer and his wife, Colleen, have three children. Their sons, Travis and Robb, are both West Point graduates and officers in the armed forces. On his second tour in Iraq, Travis leads a company of 250 soldiers in Baghdad, while Robb is a captain with the Texas National Guard. Dettmer's daughter, Krystle, attends Bethel University and is

DISTRICT 52A
2002 population: 36,767
Largest city: Forest Lake
Counties: Anoka, Washington
Top concerns: Education funding, property taxes

hoping to go into education.

During this year's session, Dettmer wants to focus on education funding, property taxes and affordable health care. He serves on the Higher Education and Work Force Development Policy and Finance and K-12 Finance divisions of the House Finance Committee, the House E-12 Education Committee and Veterans Affairs Division of the House Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Committee.

"I was a servant as a teacher at school, and a servant in the military," said Dettmer. "The call to come to St. Paul is also a tremendous service I look forward to."

Pillar of the community

Dominguez looks improve Minneapolis' north side

By NICK BUSSE

For a guy who's lived his entire life in north Minneapolis, Rep. Augustine "Willie" Dominguez (DFL-Mpls) has gotten around.



Rep. Augustine "Willie" Dominguez

Dominguez, who fills the seat vacated by new U.S. Congressman Keith Ellison, has spent more than 25 years working with community-based organizations and nonprofit groups, helping them develop what he calls "core areas" such as financing and fundraising.

Among the numerous affiliations on his resume: Centro Cultural Chicano, the Minneapolis Empowerment Zone program, the Civilian Police Review Authority and the Latino Advisory Committee to the Mayor and City Council.

"I've been involved in the community

practically all my life," said Dominguez, who can even be heard spinning Tex-Mex music on his own Saturday-morning radio show on the community-oriented KFAI, where he has also served on the board of directors.

Born and raised on the city's north side, Dominguez, the 18th child in a family of 19, said he watched his hometown take a turn for the worse.

"When I was growing up, we didn't have the issues that we have now. ... We didn't have the crime as high as it is now, and the educational system was good," he said.

Dominguez said that what was once a vibrant community marked by thriving businesses and street parades has now fallen into disrepair, plagued by gang violence and unemployment. As a state representative, he hopes to help breathe new life into it by rolling back cuts to local government aid and by fostering intervention/prevention programs, especially for youth.

"Those are good programs for youth to be involved with," Dominguez said, adding that

DISTRICT 58B
Population: 36,478
Largest city: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
Top concerns: Crime, education, employment

some such programs have been "deleted" in recent years.

Dominguez said he also seeks to improve the local education system and increase opportunities for livable-wage employment.

"The opportunities that are there are pretty much washing away. The money-making mechanisms are not there anymore. That's what needs to take place in our community."

Despite all its problems, Dominguez takes great pride in his district (which also includes parts of downtown Minneapolis), and is optimistic about its future.

"North side is beautiful, believe me," he said. "There are many good things going on, but it's like a seed. You need to grow it."

Not ready to relax

Doty spurns retirement, again, to represent district

By MIA SIMPSON

Rep. Al Doty (DFL-Royalton) is supposed to be retired.



Rep. Al Doty

He taught history for 31 years at Pierz High School and worked there as a wrestling coach and technology coordinator. He left those positions, technically entering retirement, in 1999.

It didn't stick.

Two years later he was hired as senior advocate at Horizon Health Inc. which provides living options for senior citizens, where he served clients in Morrison and Crow Wing counties. It was there he received his latest call to duty.

"Gradually over the six years, it became apparent that the problems that I came to fix came from legislative decisions," he said. "And the more you get to know politics, the more

you realize these things can be fixed."

He unsuccessfully ran as an Independence Party candidate in 2004. Two years later, he was approached by the DFL and asked to run under its banner.

"I told them, 'I'm not doing a primary,' and I asked whether I had to change anything I'd said the last time," he said. He got the answers he wanted.

Doty said he feels in touch with the party platform, and he believes many problems must be addressed this biennium.

"There isn't one issue this time," he said. "You don't get a turnover like this on one issue. There are a lot of things that are out of control."

He recalls stories during his time with Horizon Health, when elderly women would speak through tears about the situations they were facing due to health care costs, rising property taxes and other local issues.

DISTRICT 12B

2002 population: 36,677

Largest city: Little Falls

Counties: Crow Wing, Morrison

Top concerns: health care costs, property taxes

"They are just strapped," he said. "They are completely out of options and have nowhere to go. That was really one of the reasons I decided to run. It wasn't one grandma; it was a group of them."

Doty is pleased with his committee assignments: the House Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Committee and its Veterans Affairs Division; and the Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs, Environment and Natural Resources and the Transportation finance divisions of the House Finance Committee.

"I really believe I can make a difference in my district," he said.

Designing new solutions

Kalin tries to keep the big picture in mind

By PATTY OSTBERG

At the end of each day Rep. Jeremy Kalin (DFL-Lindstrom) makes a list of adversaries and proponents he needs to call to get to the bottom of legislative issues.



Rep. Jeremy Kalin

important to see all sides of the equation.

Kalin uses the state's transportation funding needs to explain his philosophy.

Roads need to be fixed, but the state doesn't have the money to do so. "We have an obligation to come up with possible alternatives," he said. Raising the gas tax could be a possibility, but coming up with several

solutions may be a better approach.

Defeating a two-term incumbent by 1.1 percent of the vote, he attributes the victory to listening, while door knocking, to constituents, working to maintain a positive attitude when discussing hot-button issues and his past coalition-building experience.

For example, in the mid-1990s, when a major utility company was going to build a power line about 20 miles long through the heart of his county, Kalin said he helped organize a citizens group to stop the implementation from taking place.

Kalin said the state needs to put more money into transportation projects. He would like to see an examination of more buses or providing rail service without dramatically changing the area's landscape or character. This issue is especially important because many of his constituents deal with congested roadways while commuting back and forth to the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Most of his

DISTRICT 17B

2002 population: 36,732

Largest city: North Branch

County: Chisago

Top concern: Minnesota's infrastructure

district is a 30- to 45-minute drive from the Capitol.

Other top issues for Kalin include: the local job market, property tax relief and better accountability through testing in schools.

In addition to serving on the Transportation Finance Division and Energy Finance and Policy Division of the House Finance Committee, Kalin serves on the House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee and is vice chairman of the House Public Safety and Civil Justice Committee.

He vows to put "people before politics," and has an open-door policy. "I really want every constituent in Chisago County to feel like they can just walk right in ... and bend my ear."

Tuesday, January 16

HF110-Huntley (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact enacted.

HF111-Loeffler (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Preventive health care promoted by requiring high deductible health plans used with a health savings account to cover preventive care with no deductible as permitted by federal law.

HF112-Lillie (DFL)
Finance
School district ice arena levy authority increased.

HF113-Thao (DFL)
Transportation Finance Division
Interstate 35E in St. Paul speed limit raised to 55 mph.

HF114-Solberg (DFL)
Taxes
Public safety radio communication products and services exempted from sales tax.

HF115-Peterson, A. (DFL)
Finance
Independent School District No. 2853, Lac qui Parle Valley, severance levy authorized.

HF116-Atkins (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
Customer sales and service call center requirements imposed.

HF117-Thissen (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Personal jurisdiction over foreign corporations and non-resident individuals modified.

HF118-Fritz (DFL)
Finance
Faribault; Paradise Center for the Arts grant provided to provide handicapped accessibility and money appropriated.

HF119-Jaros (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
St. Louis County; South St. Louis Municipality feasibility commission established.

HF120-Mariani (DFL)
Finance
Group residential housing rates modified.

HF121-Emmer (R)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Citizenship proof required to file for

specified offices, voters required to provide picture identification, identification cards issued at no charge and unverified ballots procedure established.

HF122-Rukavina (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
American flag sales regulated.

HF123-Slawik (DFL)
Finance
Education expense tax credit and deduction applied to certain expenditures for pre-kindergarten expenses and museum memberships.

HF124-Norton (DFL)
Biosciences & Emerging Technology
Biotechnology and medical genomics research funding provided to research partnership between the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Foundation, and money appropriated.

HF125-Murphy, M. (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Disability definitions provided for police and fire fund and local government correctional retirement plan members and disability and survivor benefits modified.

HF126-Murphy, M. (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Public pension plan appeal procedures modified.

HF127-Murphy, M. (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Public employee disability benefits eligibility procedures modified.

HF128-Pelowski (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Non-resident archery deer license fee modified.

HF129-Thissen (DFL)
Finance
Community partnership school grant-in-aid assistance program established and money appropriated.

HF130-Lanning (R)
Taxes
Border city enterprise zone allocations increased.

HF131-Hilstrom (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
Social Security number use restricted.

HF132-Mahoney (DFL)
Biosciences & Emerging Technology
Minnesota Biomedical Sciences Research Facilities Authority and funding program established, University of Minnesota authorized to apply for funds, bonds issued, reports required and money appropriated.

HF133-Hilstrom (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Sexual harassment claims statute of limitations suspended while employer investigations are pending.

HF134-Jaros (DFL)
Taxes
Duluth food and beverage sales tax increase authorized, and proceeds allocated to renovations and a new arena at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.

HF135-Westrom (R)
Taxes
Property tax abatement authority extended to include delinquent taxes.

HF136-Emmer (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Hennepin and Wright counties authorized to initiate a process for the change of county boundaries by resolution.

HF137-Haws (DFL)
Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs
Veteran-owned small businesses designated as targeted group businesses for purposes of awarding state and metro agency procurement contracts.

HF138-Simon (DFL)
Finance
Community education revenue program funding increased.

HF139-Kranz (DFL)
Finance
Early childhood family education, school readiness and Head Start programs funding increased.

HF140-Madore (DFL)
Finance
Voluntary full-day kindergarten funding authorized.

HF141-Haws (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Appropriations continued in effect unless a law is enacted eliminating or amending the appropriation.

HF142-Wardlow (R)
Taxes
Property tax refund household income definition modified to exempt the amount of any military disability pay received by a veteran from the federal government.

HF143-Peterson, A. (DFL)
Finance
Minnesota River Trail funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF144-Hortman (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Notary public maximum fees increased.

HF145-Hansen (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Lake Superior oceangoing vessels ballast water discharge regulation established, rules required to set treatment and management standards and formation of Great Lakes basin coalition required.

HF146-Johnson (DFL)
Transportation Finance Division
Great River Road historic roadside restoration funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF147-Johnson (DFL)
Transportation Finance Division
Mississippi River Parkway Commission expiration date extended to 2012.

HF148-Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Residential homestead property first tier classification rate valuation limit indexing provided.

HF149-DeLaForest (R)
Taxes
Sales tax reduced to 6 percent.

HF150-DeLaForest (R)
Finance
State agency fee moratorium imposed.

HF151-DeLaForest (R)
Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs
Conservation Reserve Program; Congress memorialized to reauthorize the Conservation Reserve Program as part of the 2007 farm bill.

HF152-Nornes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
Senior citizen resident fishing license provided.

HF153-Urdahl (R)**Finance**

School district shared superintendent aid provided and money appropriated.

HF154-Slocum (DFL)**Finance**

General education basic formula allowance increased.

HF155-Bigham (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Children's health security account and program created, eligibility and covered services specified, task force established and money appropriated.

HF156-Kalin (DFL)**Energy Finance & Policy Division**

Renewable energy standard established.

HF157-Morgan (DFL)**Taxes**

School district levies modified, market value property tax credit computation modified, property tax refunds increased for homeowners and renters, senior deferral eligibility increased, city and county aid increased and money appropriated.

HF158-Urdahl (R)**Taxes**

Livestock farming operations construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF159-Kahn (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Universal health care system working group established, universal coverage plan required, basic health care services rights provided and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF160-Hilty (DFL)**Finance**

Help America Vote Act account appropriations transfer authorized.

HF161-Haws (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

County and regional jail booking fees increased.

HF162-Haws (DFL)**Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs**

Minnesota GI Bill program established to provide post-secondary education assistance to veterans and money appropriated.

HF163-Huntley (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Duluth post-employment benefits accounts authorized to pay benefits to retired employees and to generate revenue dedicated to meet certain city obligations.

HF164-Murphy, M. (DFL)**Finance**

Duluth Entertainment Convention Center arena funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF165-Peppin (R)**Higher Education & Work Force Development Policy & Finance**

State funds prohibited for use in early termination of a contract of any person who reports to the University of Minnesota director of athletics.

HF166-Lesch (DFL)**Housing Policy & Finance & Public Health Finance Division**

Uniform residential tenant reports provided.

HF167-Thissen (DFL)**Finance**

Plasma arc technology and biomass or waste materials electricity generating facility pilot project funding provided and money appropriated.

HF168-Thissen (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Influenza immunizations required annually for children in a child care facility.

HF169-Slawik (DFL)**E-12 Education**

School readiness advisory board established.

HF170-Slawik (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Early childhood learning preparedness and enrichment allowance program established and class sizes for kindergarten through grade three reduced to meet the statutory state standard.

Wednesday, January 17**HF171-Hackbarth (R)****Finance**

Gasoline tax attributable to the use of all-terrain vehicles percentage modified.

HF172-Nornes (R)**Taxes**

Scambler aggregate tax authorized.

HF173-Erickson (R)**Health & Human Services**

Nursing facilities payment rates in specified counties increased to the geographic group III median rate.

HF174-DeLaForest (R)**Taxes**

Local government purchases sales tax eliminated.

HF175-Erickson (R)**Health & Human Services**

Minnesota Care; aid and attendance benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs excluded from income definition.

HF176-Thissen (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Preservation of State Documents Act established.

HF177-Lesch (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Fair share health care fund established, large employers required to report health care costs information, payments required and subsidies for approved coverage options required.

HF178-Fritz (DFL)**Finance**

Early childhood family education funding increased, minimum population used to calculate revenue increased and home visiting early childhood family education program revenue increased.

HF179-Hackbarth (R)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

School district question special election petition requirement modified.

HF180-Sertich (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Hibbing Area Redevelopment Agency dissolved, and assets and liabilities transferred to the Hibbing Economic Development Authority.

HF181-Sertich (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Legislative day references removed from the State Constitution by proposed constitutional amendment.

HF182-Murphy, E. (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Affordable conversion health coverage provided as a bridge to Medicare for persons 60 to 65 years of age.

HF183-Murphy, E. (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Medicare Part D limited medical assistance coverage provided.

HF184-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Burglary in the second degree crime definition modified.

HF185-Ward (DFL)**Finance**

Group residential housing supplemental rates modified.

HF186-Erickson (R)**Taxes**

Capital equipment sales tax imposition and refund eliminated.

HF187-Brod (R)**Taxes**

Estate tax federal exemption amount conformity provided.

HF188-Erickson (R)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Special districts defined, special districts required to file governance documents with the state auditor and audits required.

HF189-DeLaForest (R)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Scalping of tickets prohibition repealed.

HF190-DeLaForest (R)**E-12 Education**

Teaching license automatic revocation grounds expanded.

Thursday, January 18**HF191-Heidgerken (R)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Anglers allowed to use two lines and two hooks while fishing.

HF192-Urdahl (R)**Health & Human Services**

Meeker County nursing facilities placed in geographic group II.

HF193-DeLaForest (R)**Taxes**

Capital equipment sales tax imposition and refund eliminated.

HF194-Norton (DFL)**Biosciences & Emerging Technology**

Biotechnology and medical genomics research funding provided to research partnership between the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Foundation and money appropriated.

HF195-Paulsen (R)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Presidential electors designated and proportional representation provided.

HF196-Greiling (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Mental health provisions modified, inmate assessments required, children's mental health grants and training established, crisis intervention team state council created and money appropriated.

HF197-Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
Trapping added to the small game and sporting lifetime licenses.

HF198-Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
Outdoor walk-in access program established to voluntarily make available privately held land for hunting and fishing.

HF199-Brod (R)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
State senators staggered terms provided through proposed constitutional amendment.

HF200-Brod (R)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Voters authorized to vouch for three proof-of-residence oaths on Election Day, election judge training required on the conduct of partisan challengers, partisan challenger training provided and approved voter identification required.

HF201-Brod (R)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
State primary election moved from September to August.

HF202-Thissen (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Chemical dependency treatment fund eligibility expanded.

HF203-Mariani (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board legislative membership expanded.

HF204-Mullery (DFL)
E-12 Education
Special Independent School District No. 1, Minneapolis, board member removal authorized.

HF205-Mullery (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Environmental Justice Act established implementing policies and creating a task force and advisory council.

HF206-Hilstrom (DFL)
Taxes
Capital equipment sales tax imposition and refund eliminated.

HF207-Peppin (R)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Criminal neglect of a vulnerable adult penalties imposed.

HF208-Rukavina (DFL)
Finance
School districts authorized to levy for health care costs.

HF209-Rukavina (DFL)
Finance
Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board biomass facilities wood product reimbursement grant provided and money appropriated.

HF210-Thao (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Dental licensure provisions modified for applicants from non-accredited programs.

HF211-Zellers (R)
Commerce & Labor
Mortgage application information sale prohibited.

HF212-Liebling (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Foreign medical school graduates authorized to use a credentials verification service.

HF213-Anzelc (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Lakeview Cemetery Association creation and tax levy authorized.

HF214-Solberg (DFL)
Finance
Grand Rapids railroad crossings safety improvements funding provided and money appropriated.

HF215-Rukavina (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
No-fault auto insurance benefit terminations and denials regulated.

HF216-Paulsen (R)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Initiative and referendum provided, procedures and penalties specified and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF217-Walker (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Disability definition clarified relating to mood-altering chemicals.

HF218-Walker (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Health-related licensing boards complaint resolution provisions modified.

HF219-Walker (DFL)
Higher Education & Work Force Development Policy and Finance
Personal sick leave benefits extended to include care for specified relatives.

HF220-Nornes (R)
Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs
Firearms safety and usage training certificates continuation provided while soldiers and essential employees are engaged in active military service.

HF221-Urdahl (R)
Health & Human Services
Meeker County day training and habilitation provider rate reimbursement increased and proposal required to address the disparity between providers across the state.

HF222-Tillberry (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
University of Minnesota former steam plant employees included in the state health insurance group.

HF223-Thissen (DFL)
Finance
Metropolitan Council transit route required to include service to Richfield in its regular route transit between Edina and Mall of America in Bloomington.

HF224-Kahn (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Poet laureate appointed and appropriation of gift or grant money specified.

HF225-Walker (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Equality or rights under the law provided for men and women and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF226-Rukavina (DFL)
Finance
Minnesota Minerals 21st Century Fund unallotment restored and money appropriated.

HF227-Kahn (DFL)
Rules & Legislative Administration
Legislators per diem compensation payment timing modified and additional travel payments during special sessions authorized.

PENNY WISE



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Tom Barrett, executive director of the Minnesota Gambling Control Board, gives an overview of the board during a Jan. 16 meeting of the House Commerce and Labor Committee.

State of State continued from page 9

- streamlining billing and coding systems; and
- an advancement of efforts to “pay for better health rather than just procedures.”

Energy

Decrying the United States’ “sad addiction to foreign oil,” Pawlenty urged lawmakers to continue the state’s tradition of being a national leader in energy policy by passing a comprehensive renewable energy package this session. He did not lay out specifics of his so-called “Next Generation Energy Plan,” but invited legislators to “add your own ideas” to help reduce global climate change.

Veterans

Pawlenty implored Minnesotans to support members of the Minnesota National Guard and other U.S. troops serving overseas in every way possible. He resurrected a proposed legislative package from 2006 that would exempt military pensions from the state’s income tax, create a “Minnesota GI bill” for college expenses, and increase funding for veterans’ programs. In addition, he urged full funding of the National Guard’s budget requests.

Reaction

Democrats were cautious in their reactions to the governor’s speech, but expressed disappointment in some of the specifics of his proposals.

House Majority Leader Tony Sertich (DFL-Chisholm) said he wanted to see the governor’s full budget proposal before criticizing any of



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

House Majority Leader Tony Sertich offers his reaction to the media after the governor’s State of the State address Jan. 17.

his initiatives.

“We look forward to all the details, because the devil’s really in the details of all of this. So when his budget comes out next week, we’ll be doing our work, making sure where all the money is being spent,” Sertich said.

House Minority Leader Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) also said he wanted to see more details, but said Pawlenty’s speech was a “great, positive response” to the state’s issues.

“What a great message for everybody,” Seifert said. “I just was disappointed we had a lot of cold-stone reaction from the DFL, but hopefully we’ll be able to cooperate on some of these ideas.”

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said she takes issue with Pawlenty’s notion of pay-for-performance initiatives in education. She said one of the most successful states in terms of increasing students’ performances has been Florida under the administration of former Gov. Jeb Bush, who Kahn said did “exactly the opposite” of what Pawlenty is proposing.

“They [Florida] isolated the schools that were having problems, and instead of penalizing them — which is kind of what pay-for-performance sends the message that you’re going to do — they actually gave them extra help.” 🙏

Bonding continued from page 12

According to this year’s Bonds Proceeds Cancellation Report, \$9.3 million in bonding projects have been cancelled from 1996 to 2001 including \$347,385 for a Faribault prison tunnel project that was part of a \$7.5 million appropriation in 2000.

The appropriation was cancelled because the initial amount was more than what was needed once repairs and reshaping to the tunnel were made, said Kath Ouska, assistant director of project management and predesign in the State Architect’s Office.

If a project is cancelled, or an organization cannot come up with matching funds required for project approval, the bonds are not sold by the Finance Department. 🙏

Bonding for the public good

According to the nonpartisan House Research Department, there are two ways the state pays for projects through bonding. General obligation bonds are backed by the full faith, credit and taxing powers of the state; revenue bonds are backed by revenues other than a statewide tax.

General obligation bonds

Constitutionally, general obligation bonds must be used for a public purpose to achieve a legitimate public goal or benefit, even if it may result in nonpublic interests. They are usually used to make improvements to public lands and buildings, but can also be used to establish and

maintain highways; to construct, improve and operate airports and other air navigational facilities; and to improve or rehabilitate public or private railroad right-of-way and other rail facilities.

Revenue bonds

Revenue bonds must also be used for public purpose, but can also be issued by certain state agencies. Examples include the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency issuing mortgage revenue bonds, or the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority issuing bonds to finance municipal wastewater treatment and infrastructure projects.

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MAJORITY LEADER: ANTHONY "TONY" SERTICH

MINORITY LEADER: MARTY SEIFERT

MINNESOTA INDEX

State government

Average reduction, as percent, in overall funding for administrative state agencies in 2006-07 biennium.....	9
Additional revenue for the biennium, in millions, generated by additional investments in tax compliance activities	\$90.7
Percent below the national average in Minnesota's expenditures per capita for governmental administration	15
Estimated percent of state employees that will be at least 60 years old in 2015	50
Median age of a state employee in 2000	45
Median age in 1984	38
State rank in number of state government employees per 10,000 residents	33
State cost of human resources service per employee in 2005	\$768
State/local government median	\$912
State rank in a 2006 study of the most digitally advanced state governments	11
Rank in 2004	17
Estimated percent savings to state cell phone contracts that have been renegotiated since July 1, 2006	20
Approximate number of vehicles in the state fleet	8,000
Facilities, as approximate, used for vehicle or equipment maintenance and/or storage	130
Estimated buildings owned by the state	5,000
Number of "custodial" agencies that manage these buildings	22
Millions of business and professional licensing transactions estimated to be handled each year by more than 40 state agencies using more than 60 licensing systems	1
Percent of Minnesotans that favor obtaining licenses online	85
Percent of licensing transactions available online	18
Billions of dollars of incoming grant funds that the state currently pursues, distributes and manages	1
Number of grants issued	11,600
Amount saved by Department of Transportation on laptop and personal computer purchases in 2006 using a new information technology standards contract	\$169,000
Truckloads of road salt that could be purchased with that money	362

Sources: Annual Report to the Governor, The State of Minnesota's Drive to Excellence, Jan. 2, 2007; An Overview of State Government Spending, Department of Finance, November 2006.

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