

SESSION WEEKLY

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION
MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES • PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES
VOLUME 24, NUMBER 8 • FEBRUARY 23, 2007



LGA — THE GREAT EQUALIZER
CALLING ALL ANIMALS
CUBA CONNECTION

HF1063- HF1337

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.

To subscribe, contact:
Minnesota House of Representatives
Public Information Services
175 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298
(651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550 or the
Minnesota Relay service at 711 or
(800) 627-3529 (TTY)
www.house.mn/hinfo/subscribesw.asp

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

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

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Session Weekly*, House Public Information Services, 175 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-1298.

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



CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

Bioscience • 5	Employment • 10	Higher Education • 13
Bonding • 5	Energy • 10	Humanities • 14
Consumers • 5	Environment • 11	Local Government • 14
Crime • 6	Game & Fish • 11	Military • 15
Education • 7	Government • 11	Taxes • 15
Elections • 9	Health & Human Services • 12	Transportation • 16

BILL INTRODUCTIONS (HF1063-HF1337) • 18 - 23

FEATURES

FIRST READING: LGA — The great equalizer • 3-4

PEOPLE: New members profiled: Morgan and Swails • 17

MINNESOTA INDEX: Paying for post-secondary schooling • 24

On the cover: Jacob Hakes, from left, Austyn Colas, Eli Grayson and Charlie Whiting from Cub Scout Pack 408 in Shoreview learn about the voting buttons on a members' desk in the House Chamber from Rep. Steve Simon prior to the Feb. 19 floor session. The Capitol hats are available from House Public Information Services.

—Photo by: Tom Olmscheid

The great equalizer

Police, streets and service — cities ask: 'Where's our LGA?'

By SONJA HEGMAN

The "Minnesota Miracle" is not quite the phenomenon it was 36 years ago. The program's goal was to ensure residents received adequate services without large differences in taxes. It also changed school funding by placing the burden for money onto the state rather than local sources.

Local Government Aid was a piece of the program and has been anything but helpful in recent years. Cities across the state have taken a hit, losing some or all of the money since 2003.

In 2003, the new Local Government Aid formula became need-based, causing cities to never know what they will receive from one year to the next.

Baxter lost all of its LGA in 2003. Before the program was reformed, the city would have gotten about \$128,000 in 2003, down from \$353,000 the previous year. Though all of that money was cut, the city has not had to cut services, but it did have to levy more taxes.

"That's never very popular," said Dennis Coryell, Baxter city administrator.

But the highest impact to the city came

when \$201,000 in Homestead and Agricultural Credit Aid was cut. Coryell said that money had helped keep property taxes in check. But, even with the LGA and HACA cuts, property taxes haven't risen astronomically because Baxter has a large commercial tax base.

Situated next to Brainerd, Baxter is considered a regional center for shopping and other services. With a population of just 7,800, the city sees 60,000 to 80,000 people per day with many big box stores, like Target and Best Buy. Coryell said the city has to pay increased costs for utilities for those added people. The rates for the city's water and sewer are among the top one-third in the state. The lost LGA money might have gone to either keep utility rates down or help to fund a wastewater treatment plant the city is constructing with

Brainerd, Coryell said.

To obtain needed dollars, Baxter added a half-cent sales tax. Collections started in October and will last for 12 years. The tax is estimated to generate \$1 million in revenue in the first year, which Coryell said will help offset some of the city's utility costs.

One piece of the tax puzzle

LGA is designed to go to cities that are the least able to provide an adequate level of services with an average tax rate. But all cities took a hit to that aid in 2003.

"If you don't give aid to those cities, they'll probably have higher than average tax rates and still won't be able to provide services," said Pat Dalton from the nonpartisan House Research Department.

With property tax relief on the agenda this session, [Rep. Paul Marquart](#) (DFL-Dilworth), chairman of the House Property Tax Relief and Local Sales Tax Division, said property tax relief is something that has to hit every area of the state and must be permanent.

"We have to make sure anything we do carries into the future," he said. And LGA is just one piece of the puzzle in property tax reform.

LGA helps keep property taxes down, but also helps fund services like police, Marquart said. LGA increases will primarily help Minneapolis, St. Paul and rural areas. Because it's need-based, many suburban cities, that

First Reading continued on page 4



Photo courtesy of Officer Daniel Gates, Centennial Lakes Police Department

The Centennial Lakes Police Department moved into its new building in 2006 after being crammed in the basement of Circle Pines City Hall. The move was necessary, but also added to the city's tax burden.

have higher tax bases, don't receive it.

Marquart said a property tax package has to include school levy reductions, market value homestead credit expansions and property tax refund expansions to include the cities receiving aid and those who are not.

"LGA is the great equalizer," he said. "It's the lifeblood for cities that need it."

The idea behind LGA was that no matter where a person lives in the state they could have roughly the same general services — like law enforcement, street departments and fire departments — at roughly the same cost, Marquart said.

High taxes vs. cuts

In Circle Pines, property taxes have increased 60 percent since 2003, in part because of the phasing out of its LGA, said City Administrator Jim Keinath.

"Residents have complained about the high taxes and we say, 'Yeah, you're right. What do you want us to cut?'" Keinath said. "There is no reasonable thing to cut. We're a small city and can't cut essential services."

Considered part of the Twin Cities metro area, Circle Pines, with a population of just more than 5,000, gradually lost nearly \$253,000 in LGA over three years, getting nothing by 2005. In 2006, cities with less than 5,000 residents started receiving \$6 per capita in LGA because they do not receive municipal state aid.

The city has made \$100,000 in cuts, Keinath said. Many cuts hit parks and recreation, but cuts were distributed throughout the city. In addition, the city had to build a police station in 2005 because its police department was crammed into the basement of the city hall, also affecting property taxes.

The 2003 reform

The LGA program has constantly evolved since its inception in 1971. Called the "Minnesota Miracle," it used to go to all local governments but changed into a city-only program.

In 1989, how much a city received in aid depended on how much was levied in the past, Dalton said. If a city levied more, it would get more aid. But because nobody really liked that, she said every year the formula was modified. In 1993, formulas were developed by the League of Minnesota Cities that stayed in place until 2003.

The further the state got from 1993, the more people started saying there were things not quite measured in the formula, Dalton said. In 2002, the state hit the budget crisis, so the governor decided to rework the formula.

This was decided, Dalton said, because cities that had need in 1993 might not need it anymore.

So, in the 2003 reform, the LGA formula became need-based. For cities with populations of 2,500 or less, the aid is determined by population, population decline, housing built before 1940 and the percent of property classified as commercial/industrial. The formula for all other cities is based on population decline, housing built before 1940, road accident rate, average household size and city location.

From 1993 until 2003, cities were guaranteed a certain amount of aid every year. City LGA was reduced to \$465 million in calendar year 2003 from the originally certified appropriation of \$587 million. It was reduced further in calendar year 2004 to \$429 million with an additional \$8 million paid in transition aid for one year. In 2005, the appropriation was set at \$437 million annually.

When the new formula was instituted, the state decided to gradually phase cities' aid up or down so everyone would eventually be at the same level. No city can go up or down more than 10 percent of its previous year's levy. But the aid was increased \$48 million to \$485 million annually beginning with calendar year 2006.

Since cities were being phased up and down, 300 cities were already getting their maximum aid under the 10 percent cap before the extra money was added. The additional money went to cities that weren't at the maximum cap.

"Suddenly all of these cities got lots of aid," Dalton said. Because of the cap it couldn't go to cities, which under the formula, should have gotten it.


That changed again in 2007.

The cap comes off

Dalton said all of the cities that were at the cap are now uncapped because they could go up by 10 percent of the 2006 levy. All money that should have gone to capped cities according to the formula in 2006 is going to them in 2007, and that money is coming from the cities that received it in 2006.

"That had a significant impact," Dalton said.

The state knew Minneapolis and St. Paul weren't capped. A lot of cities didn't realize they got an increase in 2006 until they saw a loss in 2007.

The governor has proposed another \$10 million increase for LGA in his 2008-09 budget, but many legislators have said that's "just a drop in the bucket" to get the aid back to its pre-reform level. 

Big city concerns

Gov. Tim Pawlenty proposed an increase to Local Government Aid in his 2008-09 biennial budget. The extra \$10 million would be added in 2007, but cities of 100,000 or more would have to use any LGA increase for public safety. This affects only Minneapolis and St. Paul. If passed, it has the potential of affecting other cities in the future, as some are approaching 100,000 in population.

"The governor's proposal was outrageous because it exclusively discriminated against two highly DFL cities and totally controlled their use of the money," [Rep. Joe Mullery](#) (DFL-Mpls) said.

Revenue Commissioner Ward Einess said Pawlenty's inspiration for this proposed mandate came from a bill introduced last session by Mullery. His bill would have given Minneapolis extra aid to help stem the very high crime rates in poorer neighborhoods. But Mullery does not want LGA money to be designated for anything.

Increases in regular LGA could go toward many city services that would help his north Minneapolis community, in addition to police and fire, Mullery said. He added that prosecutors, housing inspectors, initiatives for youth activities and health workers, among others, would help the city and make law enforcement more effective. These are the same things that were cut when LGA was lost in 2003.

Mullery said his bill last year would have been similar to a special aid program that used to go directly to counties to be used only for crime-related costs.

Minneapolis lost \$26 million in 2003 and \$9 million more in 2004.

On the other side of the river, St. Paul lost \$35 million in LGA funds in 2003.

"It's been critical to our city for the quality of life people expect," said [Rep. Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul). "We've tried to hold the line on property tax increases, but the city has no choice but to raise its property tax levy."

He doesn't want any LGA increases to be dedicated.

"It's a bad precedent and sort of a slap in the face to our cities," he said. "There's an inference that somehow the chiefs of police, mayors and city councils of Minneapolis and St. Paul don't care about public safety or are somehow irresponsible with their decision making relative to LGA. That simply is not true."

After inflation, Paymar said St. Paul's proposed 2007 LGA increase would be less than \$1 million. Minneapolis would see about \$2 million. Others say it looks like one-time money.

(S. HEGMAN)

To find out who represents you at the Capitol . . .

Call House Public Information

Services at (651) 296-2146

or (800) 657-3550

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select bills heard in House committees held Feb. 15-22 and other House activity. To track the progress of a bill, go to www.leg.state.mn and click on Bill Search, Status and MyBills.

BIOSCIENCE

University facility

A process to use \$279 million of state general obligation bonds for a biomedical science research facility, to be owned and operated by the University of Minnesota, was approved by the House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee Feb. 21.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul), [HF132](#) establishes a bonding process for the facility of which the state would pay 90 percent and the university would match 10 percent. The bill also includes the membership makeup of the Minnesota Biomedical Sciences Research Facilities Authority to oversee the facility and authorize grants, and establishes a sunset of June 30, 2019, for bonding authority once all projects have been completed in establishing the facility.

Other facilities have taken up to eight years to get through funding processes, and the bioscience industry in Minnesota used to be tops in the nation, Mahoney said.

Because of the reluctance of "this Legislature and this state to make a commitment to this university and its research facilities we are not there any longer," he added.

[Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.](#) (DFL-Winona), the committee chairman, asked if other university bonding requests would be lowered because of the amount needed to build the facility. He also voiced concerns in how the bill gives bonding approval to the authority on the project.

Richard Pfutzenreuter, chief financial officer for the university, said he didn't know what the president and Board of Regents would be making for other bonding requests.

The bill now goes to the House Finance Committee.

A companion, [SF265](#), sponsored by [Sen. Richard Cohen](#) (DFL-St. Paul), awaits action by the Senate Rules and Administration Committee.

— P. OSTBERG

BONDING

Asian cultural center

The House passed a bill that would allow the Asian Pacific Cultural Center access to \$400,000 approved in last year's bonding law.

Sponsored by [Rep. Cy Thao](#) (DFL-St. Paul), [HF87](#) simply inserts the word "predesign" that was omitted from the bonding proposal last year. Because of this, the center could not get access to funds approved for its building project.

Approved 124-8 Feb. 19, the bill was sent to the Senate where [Sen. Mee Moua](#) (DFL-St. Paul) is the sponsor. It now awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

The estimated \$6 million center is to be located at the former Hamms Brewery site on Minnehaha Avenue in St. Paul. Four contiguous buildings are to be retrofitted to create the center. Current plans call for a multi-level building of about 65,000-square feet with a gallery and library center, a banquet room that will accommodate up to 500 people, a 265-seat theater designed for performing arts and cinematic viewing, the center's administrative office, a commercial kitchen, a gift shop, 15-20 offices for tenants and 15-20 classrooms.

— S. HEGMAN

Sewer flood prevention

A southeastern Minnesota city would like help staying dry.

Sponsored by [Rep. Patti Fritz](#) (DFL-Faribault), [HF109](#) would appropriate \$1.5 million to Blooming Prairie to design and construct storm sewer, sanitary water, water main and street improvements for the city's north corridor, which has experienced flooding in the past few years. The bill was held over Feb. 15 by the House Capital Investment Finance Division for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

"We don't have a river, lake or pond close to us," said Mike Jones, Blooming Prairie city administrator. "We're not even on the flood plain because we are so far away from any water. We're dealing with a community that is growing and we can't continue to tax our taxpayers to bring infrastructure that is needed to continue to grow."

In September 2004, the city received 12 inches of rain in eight hours. About 400 homes had flood damage because of sanitary sewer backups and surface flooding. Flood damage also occurred in 1993, 1999 and 2000. The proposed improvements would serve a

204-acre watershed and would significantly decrease flood potential by increasing the current storm sewer capacity 4.5 times over the existing system.

A companion bill, [SF64](#), sponsored by [Sen. Dick Day](#) (R-Owatonna), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

— S. HEGMAN

CONSUMERS

Removing restrictions on Cuba

Removing trade and travel restrictions with Cuba could bring in millions of dollars for the state according to several testifiers in the House Commerce and Labor Committee Feb. 20.

Ralph Kaehler, a Minnesota farmer, said Cuba has the potential of being a top trading partner of certain agricultural goods such as powdered milk. From 2001 to 2004, Cuba imported \$100 million in powdered milk, and is currently the fourth largest importer from the United States, he said.

[Rep. Phyllis Kahn](#) (DFL-Mpls) sponsors [HF828](#) and [HR2](#) that would encourage fewer trade, travel and financial restrictions to Cuba. Both say, "Minnesota is ideally positioned to benefit from the market opportunities that free trade with Cuba would provide, as trade restrictions succeed only in driving sales to competitors in other countries that have no such restrictions."

Both were approved and sent to the House Floor. There was no opposition.

A resolution "gives a body the chance to speak with the voice of the body," Kahn said. It may not be better than a letter to a congressman or governor, but it is a magnification of that voice, she said.

Companion to the bill, [SF599](#), is sponsored by [Sen. Jim Vickerman](#) (DFL-Tracy). It awaits action in the Senate Business, Industry and Jobs Committee. There is no companion to HR2.

— P. OSTBERG

Social Security restrictions

A bill to limit the use of Social Security numbers was weakened after compromises were made with stakeholders, said [Rep. Debra Hilstrom](#) (DFL-Brooklyn Center), the sponsor of [HF131](#) in the House Commerce and Labor Committee Feb. 15.

The bill would still restrict a person or entity from using Social Security numbers for certain purposes. This includes selling,

loaning, trading, renting or otherwise disclosing a Social Security number to a third party without written consent to the individual, if the person knows or reasonably believes the third party lacks a legitimate purpose for obtaining the individual's Social Security number.

Hilstrom removed language that would have restricted transmission of a Social Security number over the Internet unless it was essential to the transaction, and changed the word "instead" to say "necessary" to the transaction. She also removed from her original bill restrictions that would apply unless the number was required or authorized by state or federal law.

[Rep. Tim Mahoney](#) (DFL-St. Paul) said he would have a hard time supporting a "super-sized hole" in the bill created by the changed language.

Hilstrom said the bill would still provide protection for consumers. "If the transaction does not require the Social Security number, you ought not be using it," she said.

The change is in response to a 2005 law scheduled to take effect July 1, 2007, that would, in part, restrict businesses from printing a Social Security number on a card needed to utilize the business products or services, or put a person's number on materials mailed to them. However, the 2005 law will exempt certain businesses that are already using the numbers for certain purposes. HF131 would remove the exemption.

The amended language is consistent with what other states have passed regarding Social Security privacy laws, said Mark Ireland, assistant attorney general in the office's Consumer Division.

The bill language may be included in an omnibus data privacy bill. The bill now goes to the House Public Safety and Civil Justice Committee.

A companion bill, [SF793](#), sponsored by [Sen. Satveer Chaudhary](#) (DFL-Fridley), awaits action by the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee.

— P. OSTBERG

CRIME

Funding short-term offender housing

A 2003 law shifted the responsibility of housing short-term offenders from the state to the counties, but did not include extra funding.

In efforts to give counties financial relief for housing the offenders, Reps. [Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul) and [Larry Haws](#) (DFL-St. Cloud) are sponsoring [HF684](#) and [HF492](#), respectively. Each was approved by the House Public Safety

and Civil Justice Committee Feb. 20.

If an offender is given a prison sentence of less than six months, or if an offender violates their probation and has less than six months to serve, he or she serves out their time in a county jail. The state now pays counties \$9 a day for each short-term offender, when the average cost of incarceration is \$55 a day.

Paymar's bill would appropriate \$6.45 million in each year of the next biennium to counties for housing short-term felons, with the maximum daily reimbursement at \$70. The bill awaits action by the House Finance Committee.

A companion bill, [SF417](#), sponsored by [Sen. Linda Higgins](#) (DFL-Mpls), was laid over

Feb. 19 by the Senate Public Safety Budget Division.

Haws' bill would establish a task force to evaluate the short-term offender program and provide suggestions for improvement. The task force would include representatives from the Department of Corrections, the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association, county attorneys, public defenders and probation officers. The bill's next stop is the House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee.

A companion bill, [SF556](#), sponsored by [Sen. Rick Olseen](#) (DFL-Harris), awaits action by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

— C. GREEN

ART PORTAL

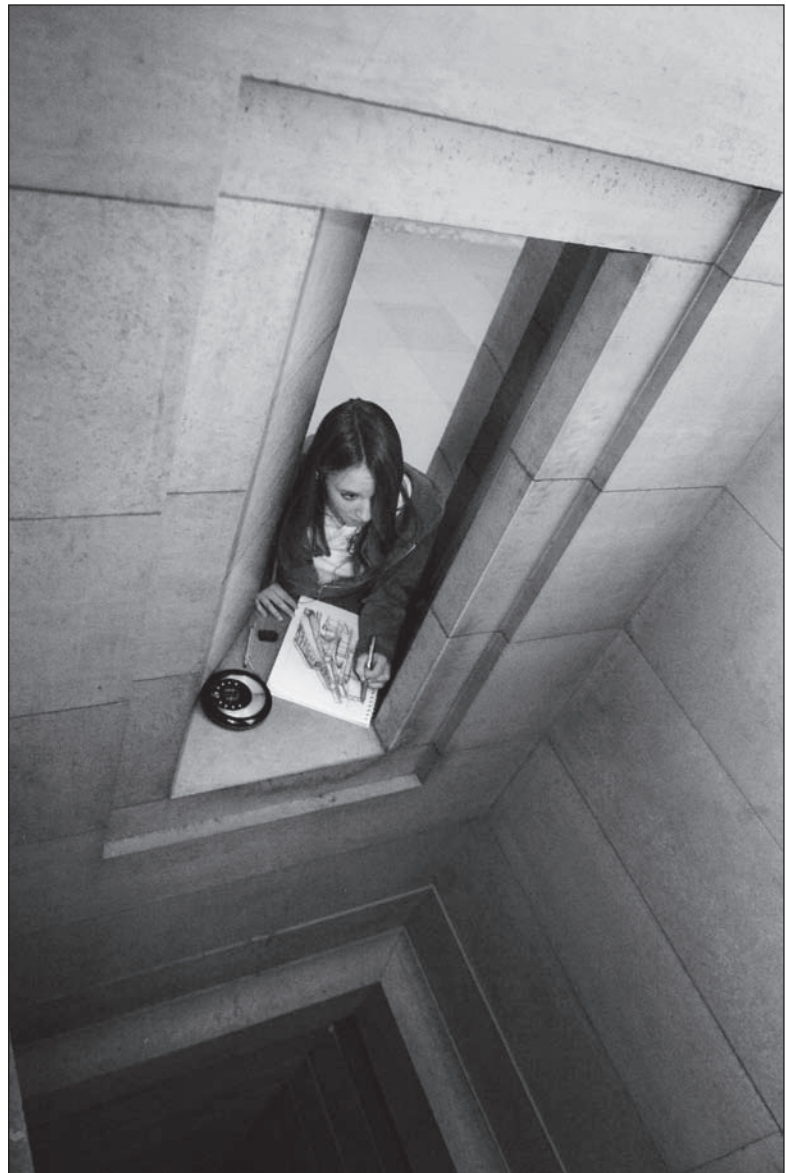


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Colleen Peters, a sophomore at Providence Academy in Plymouth, uses a portal at the base of the Supreme Court grand stairway to work on an architectural sketch of a portion of the Capitol building Feb. 13.

Mentors needed

If children are the future, we must nurture them and provide discipline.

This is the focus of two bills laid over by the House Public Safety Finance Division Feb. 20 for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

[HF460](#), sponsored by [Rep. John Lesch](#) (DFL-St. Paul), would allocate \$620,000 to the All Children Excel Program in Ramsey County; and [HF342](#), sponsored by [Rep. Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul), proposes awarding \$500,000 to nonprofit organizations that provide one-to-one mentoring programs to children whose parent or other significant family member is incarcerated.

Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt said the ACE Program, started in 1999, is an early intervention program for offenders ages 6 to 9, who are at high risk of committing serious and violent crimes. The program works with the children over a number of years, often until they are 18 years old, helping them to make positive contributions to their community.

Eight percent of the youth population is responsible for 70 percent of the crimes committed by youth, Reinhardt said.

Paymar said that one out of every 40 children in Minnesota has a parent who is incarcerated. The purpose of the mentoring programs is to make sure that these children don't end up in the justice system as well. Resources and positive relationships must be available for these children to succeed, Paymar said.

Gloria Lewis, president and CEO of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities, said that her organization's goal is to be a prevention program. "We want to stop people from going to jail," Lewis said.

Pete Rhodes, a mentor in the program, said that it's important to provide youth with hope and discipline, and to help them become productive citizens in their communities.

Two companion bills, [SF344](#), sponsored by [Sen. Mee Moua](#) (DFL-St. Paul), and [SF99](#), sponsored by [Sen. Linda Higgins](#) (DFL-Mpls), await action by the Senate Finance Committee.

— C. GREEN

Stolen car relief

When someone has their car stolen, often they have to pay to get it back.

[HF425](#) is an effort to give victims some relief.

Sponsored by [Rep. Michael Paymar](#) (DFL-St. Paul), the bill proposes to expand a grant account to provide emergency assistance to reimburse a crime victim for fees incurred when their stolen car is impounded. It was approved by the House Public Safety and Civil

Justice Committee Feb. 15 and referred to the House Public Safety Finance Division.

The companion, [SF1005](#), sponsored by Sen. Mee Moua (DFL-St. Paul), awaits action in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

According to the nonpartisan House Research Department, "the grant program currently provides assistance to crime victims for replacing broken doors and windows, installing security devices and cleaning up crime scenes."

Jennifer Nodes, executive director of the Minnesota General Crime Victim Coalition, said that for the victims, auto theft is more than an inconvenience. There are new transportation costs to get to work and medical appointments, days of work are missed and credit card debts increase to pay for retrieving cars.

Money for the program would come from the Auto Theft Protection Program, with grants—to a maximum of \$300—distributed by local prosecutors and victim assistance programs. Those who receive reimbursement from their insurance companies are not eligible.

— C. GREEN

EDUCATION

Community education funding

Minnesota adults that are in need of basic skills instruction could see a funding increase for the programs they use to better themselves.

Sponsored by [Rep. Steve Simon](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park), [HF138](#) would raise the amount a district could levy to support general community education. On Feb. 20, the House Early Childhood Learning Finance Division laid the bill over for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

The bill would raise the amount that a district can levy from \$5.42 per pupil unit in fiscal year 2007 to \$5.95 times the greater of 2,000 or the population of the district beginning in fiscal year 2008.

"Over 900,000 adults statewide participate in one or more adult education programs," said Mary O'Brien, Youth and Family Services program manager for St. Louis Park Community Education, adding that 1.7 million youth are served by one or more programs.

More than 82,000 adults are helped statewide by Adult Basic Education, one of several programs that are included in adult education. This program provides basic academic skills to help participants earn their GED, gain citizenship, get better employment and enter post-secondary education.

"The cost for everything has risen over the past 20 years and community education has not been immune to that. As good as we are, we have just about maxed out of what we can do with less," O'Brien said.

A companion bill, [SF203](#), sponsored by [Sen. Ron Latz](#) (DFL-St. Louis Park), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

— S. HARDING

Alternative school success

Alternative learning schools can have a stigma of only having "bad kids" and students that have fallen through the cracks.

Ryan Tanttila and Katrina Blankenship testified Feb. 19 before the House Education Finance and Economic Competitiveness Finance Division to dispel the myth. No action was taken.

"I slipped through the cracks. ... I was bored with the material in class and that boredom led to rebellious behavior and I would get expelled," Tanttila said of his experience at a regular high school. He enrolled at the Phoenix Learning Center in Buffalo, graduated high school, went to St. Cloud State University and now is a language arts teacher. "I got more individual attention instead of the negative attention I was getting at the high school and that was what I needed," he said.

Students attend alternative learning schools for many reasons, including truancy problems, expulsion, falling academically behind their grade level, pregnancy and homelessness. At the schools, students work at their own pace, enjoy small class sizes and receive one-on-one attention with teachers. According to Tanttila, the most important things he learned are good study habits and time management skills.

Blankenship is a senior at the Plymouth Youth Center. "I couldn't complete assignments on time. I did hear that alternative schools were bad, it was a school for bad kids but a friend told me to try it out," she said.

She enjoys school now. "Teachers care for you as a person, and if you have problems they will help you with them." When she completes her schooling, Blankenship wants to open either a restaurant or a coffee shop. "I'm graduating next year, I'm graduating a little late but I am graduating."

— S. HARDING

More children's museum funding

According to [Rep. Nora Slawik](#) (DFL-Maplewood), the Minnesota Children's Museum is a place where children learn by playing, and is a resource for children across the state.

Slawik, who serves on the museum board, is sponsoring [HF759](#) that would raise state support to the museum from \$260,000 a year

to \$375,000 a year. The House K-12 Finance Division laid it over for possible inclusion into its omnibus bill.

The \$750,000 would be split between maintaining current quality levels and to help create the Pint Size Math and Science Program.

The museum's \$4.9 million annual operating budget comes from admissions, contributions, the gift shop, parking and state funding. It has about 420,000 annual visitors.

"We have a focus on children from newborn to the age of 10," said Museum President Sarah Caruso. "We have a free Sunday each month, all school groups come at subsidized rate, and we give away 2,000 free family memberships," she said. The museum loses \$825,000 in revenue to offer free or reduced admission to families and school groups.

A companion bill, [SF631](#), sponsored by [Sen. Geoff Michel](#) (R-Edina), awaits action in the Senate Finance Committee.

— S. HARDING

Early childhood funding priorities

At-risk parents and children would be given priority to Early Childhood Family Education programs when funds are limited, under a proposed bill.

Sponsored by [Rep. David Bly](#) (DFL-Northfield), [HF585](#) was approved Feb. 15 by the House E-12 Education Committee. It now goes to the House Early Childhood Learning Finance Division.

The bill would raise the amount of revenue for ECFE programs for school districts from \$112 to \$120 for fiscal year 2008 and beyond times the greater of 180 or the number of children under age 5 in the district on Oct. 1 of the previous year.

The home visiting levy has been altered to allow funds to be used for home and hospital visits for families with newborns, and for educational and social services. The levy amount has been raised from \$1.60 to \$3.20 times the number of people under 5 years old residing in the district on Sept. 1 of the previous school year.

"I know that home visits are cost affective. I just worry that we are becoming too intrusive, and all of a sudden we will have, 'You will have a home visit and everyone will participate,'" said Rep. Lynn Wardlow (R-Eagan).

"I'm one of these people that doesn't think you should be intrusive," said Lois Engstrom, past chair of the Minnesota Association for Family and Early Education. "Families are offered these programs, they don't make unannounced visits even in the hospital, and people are invited into the program. Some families want the contact but don't want someone coming into their homes, and they



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

While speaking about the United Way's Success by Six program, Chris Klimpel, a St. Cloud parent and business owner, displays a small shoe to the House Early Childhood Learning Finance Division Feb. 15 to signify children in the first four years of life. Rep. Steve Gottwalt, right, smiles during the presentation.

set up meeting at mutually agreed places. They're not forced on anyone."

A companion bill, [SF579](#), sponsored by [Sen. Terri Bonoff](#) (DFL-Minnetonka), awaits action in the Senate Finance Committee.

— S. HARDING

International medical graduates

Legislation that would open more pathways for international medical graduates to prove their credentials awaits action by the House Licensing Subcommittee, which held it over Feb. 19 for consideration in its omnibus bill.

[HF212](#), sponsored by [Rep. Tina Liebling](#) (DFL-Rochester), essentially revokes legislation passed in 2004 that requires international medical graduates to verify their credentials through a national organization, Federal Credentials Verification Service.

"What this bill does is make it permissive again, not mandatory, so that other avenues can be used for this verification process," she said.

According to Frank Iossi, director of government affairs for the Mayo Clinic, the current law has created a quagmire for the service due to immense workload and demands. The result, he said, is fewer international graduates given the opportunity to work in the United States.

"This has been a complete nightmare," Iossi said. "It has made it very difficult for international medical graduates to get credentialed in the U.S., and very costly, and at times we've have people ... who cannot practice because they've been held up in the bureaucracy."

Iossi estimated that between 15 and 25 graduates are affected each year at the Mayo Clinic.

A companion bill, [SF44](#), sponsored by [Sen. Ann Lynch](#) (DFL-Rochester), awaits action by the Senate Health, Housing and Family Security Committee.

— M. SIMPSON

International Baccalaureate funding

Minnetonka High School senior KC Garvey Hall knew she wanted to be part of the International Baccalaureate program even before it was offered at her school.

"I loved the way it was described, learning at a deeper level and instead of at a base level," she said.

Now she is studying the more vigorous IB standard-level science and higher-level math. "I think that any program that allows students to create an individual program that is still rigorous is an excellent thing to have at a school."

Sponsored by [Rep. Joe Atkins](#) (DFL-Inver Grove Heights), [HF804](#) would allow school districts to access funding that would increase and expand the availability of IB courses. Similar provisions exist for pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement courses.

The House E-12 Education Committee approved the bill Feb. 20. It was heard Feb. 22 by the House K-12 Finance Division which laid it over for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

The bill would appropriate \$7.3 million for fiscal year 2008 and \$8.11 million for fiscal

year 2009 to help schools either create a new IB program or expand an existing program that leads to IB authorization.

The funds could be used for teacher training and instruction; to improve transition for students between grade levels to better prepare them for succeeding in the program; to purchase books or supplies; or to pay course or program fees.

Similar to pre-AP and AP courses, participating schools would receive funding of \$85 times the number of students enrolled on Oct. 1 of the previous fiscal year.

A companion bill, [SF589](#), sponsored by [Sen. Terri Bonoff](#) (DFL-Minnetonka), awaits action by the Senate Education Committee.

— S. HARDING

School lunch funding

Providing nutritious school lunches for students is a resource that schools must provide.

“Having spent my career in education it didn’t take me long to realize if children are to be successful in school, one of the basic needs was adequate nutrition,” [Rep. John Benson](#) (DFL-Minnetonka) said.

Benson sponsors [HF776](#) that would raise the amount the state must pay participants in the national school lunch program from 10.5 cents to 12 cents for each full, paid, reduced and free student lunch.

The House K-12 Finance Division laid it over Feb. 20 for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill. A companion bill, [SF1012](#), sponsored by [Sen. LeRoy Stumpf](#) (DFL-Plummer), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

“This bill is looking for a very moderate increase of 9.3 percent over the biennium,”

Benson said. The biennial cost would be \$3 million.

According to Greg Crowe of the nonpartisan House Fiscal Analysis Department, in fiscal year 2005 the federal government provided \$99 million for the school lunch program and the state provided \$8 million. The state costs in the subsequent two years were \$9 million and \$10.5 million.

In the past few legislative sessions, there have been program and budget cuts to the school lunch program, resulting in districts falling 43 cents short for each lunch served.

“To make up that 43-cent gap, schools started to sell a la carte items because schools are expected to run nutrition programs that are self-supporting,” said Elaine Keefe representing the Minnesota School Nutrition Association. “Unfortunately the most popular a la carte items are low-nutritious items, like a bag of chips,” she said. Schools make a profit off of these items and then subsidize lunch programs with the profits.

The extra funding would allow schools to purchase healthy items like apples to reduce the dependency on low-nutritious snacks.

— S. HARDING

STEM initiative funding

The Science Museum of Minnesota is not only a place of wonder and imagination for families. It is also a resource for teachers’ continuing education programs.

[Rep. Carlos Mariani](#) (DFL-St. Paul) is sponsoring [HF493](#), which would appropriate \$3 million to the museum for the statewide science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) initiative.

Mariani presented the bill on Feb. 15 to the

House K-12 Finance Division, which held it over for possible consideration in its omnibus bill.

“Hundreds, if not thousands, of teachers receive professional development and training from the Science Museum. This bill would make an appropriation of \$750,000 a year for the Science Museum STEM teacher development and outreach initiative,” Mariani said.

Appropriations for the initiative would be \$3 million for the 2008-09 biennium. Of that, \$750,000 each year would go for expanding and supporting the middle school math and science initiative, including teacher workshops and expanded outreach programs in classrooms.

“Over the next 10 years, economic forecasts project a 20 to 33 percent increase in scientific and technical occupations in Minnesota. If you want a high paying job it will most likely be in STEM areas,” said David Chittenden, vice president of education at the museum. “Minnesota will find skilled scientists and technical workers for the new STEM-driven economy, and they may not be Minnesota students.”

He said that only 11 percent of eighth graders and 10 percent of 10th-grade students have declared an interest in pursuing STEM courses.

A companion bill, [SF578](#), sponsored by [Sen. Patricia Torres Ray](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

— S. HARDING

ELECTIONS

Everyone can vote absentee

Today’s fast-paced society full of multi-tasking individuals is the impetus for a bill that would allow any eligible voter to vote by absentee ballot. Approved by the House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee Feb. 15, the bill now goes to the House State Government Finance Division.

Sponsored by [Rep. Jeremy Kalin](#) (DFL-Lindstrom), [HF768](#) would remove current requirements to obtain an absentee ballot. These include illness, isolation or quarantine, disability, religious discipline, observance of a holiday and serving as an election judge.

Kalin said current voting requirements don’t reflect societal changes. While campaigning, he said he heard from constituents that the ability to vote should be made more convenient.

Also under the bill, voters who have difficulty getting to the polls because of health reasons, as well as residents of assisted living facilities, would be eligible for delivery of ballots via an



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

Representing the Minnesota School Nutrition Association, Elaine Keefe shows the House K-12 Finance Division an example of the fresh broccoli that could be provided if school lunch aid were increased.

agent. Only people in health care facilities, participants in a residential program for adults and residents of shelters for battered women are now able to receive ballots by an agent.

[Rep. Laura Brod](#) (R-New Prague) unsuccessfully offered an amendment that would have defined an agent as someone the voter previously knew, to avoid voters being persuaded by an agent to cast a ballot in a certain way.

Ongoing absentee voter status would be permitted, under the bill.

The current absentee process includes an additional application in order to receive the ballot each voting cycle. The time periods between the processes can easily be missed by those who have types of employment causing them to be gone for long periods of time, like an over-the-road truck driver, [Rep. Bill Hilty](#) (DFL-Finlayson) said.

A companion bill, [SF208](#), sponsored by [Sen. Kathy Sheran](#) (DFL-Mankato), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

— P. OSTBERG

EMPLOYMENT

Union notices in the workplace

It used to be that union notices could be posted on a break room bulletin board for all to see. Now employees can e-mail this information to necessary recipients.

Some employers have begun to put restrictions on the practice, however.

Sponsored by [Rep. Tom Anzelc](#) (DFL-Balsam Township), [HF611](#) would prohibit an employer from disciplining an employee because the person communicated with a labor or employee organization while on the work premises or through their work computer, even if it is in accordance with the policy and rules established by the employer and the collective bargaining agent.

Approved Feb. 16 by the House Labor and Consumer Protection Division, and Feb. 20 by the House Commerce and Labor Committee, the bill next goes to the House Public Safety and Civil Justice Committee.

We don't want to override any reasonable rules set forth by an employer or through labor negotiations, such as having to do this on an employee's break or during their lunch period, said Teresa Joppa, staff attorney for AFSCME Council 65. "This legislation concerns communications from one employee to another that concern union business or workplace issues."

Opponents said management needs to be able to regulate communication so employees are not abusing their work time, and that the bill would preempt federal labor relations law.

"If the state of Minnesota passes this law, it's going to be passing a law that makes Minnesota different from every other of the 49 states, and that is what is specifically not allowed by the Garmen doctrine and the many, many dozens of cases that have come up since," said Alec Beck, a labor lawyer with Seaton, Beck & Peters.

A companion bill, [SF539](#), sponsored by [Sen. David Tomassoni](#) (DFL-Chisholm), awaits action by the Senate Business, Industry and Jobs Committee.

— M. COOK

ENERGY

Cut costs, get a bonus?

Have you ever thought of a way your office could save money by being more energy-efficient? What if coming up with a winning idea could net you a thousand bucks?

A bill sponsored by [Rep. Andy Welti](#) (DFL-Plainview) would do just that for state employees.

[HF295](#) would provide a financial incentive for state workers to suggest energy cost-cutting measures to their respective agencies. If an employee's idea works, they would get a bonus amounting to 50 percent of the money saved, up to \$1,000.

Welti said he got the idea from IBM, which has had a similar program in place for years — one that he said has saved the company thousands of dollars. He said the program wouldn't require any money from the state because it would pay for itself. In addition, Welti said employees could only take advantage of the program twice.

As an example of ideas that could be used, he cited an IBM employee who suggested that his company turn off all the lights in the soda vending machines in his building.

The House Energy Finance and Policy Division laid the bill over Feb. 19 for possible inclusion into its omnibus bill. The companion, [SF1090](#), is sponsored by Sen. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington). It awaits action in the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

— N. BUSSE

Geothermal heat pumps

A bill sponsored by [Rep. Bev Scalze](#) (DFL-Little Canada) aims to find out whether the secret to energy conservation lies buried in the ground.

[HF393](#) would provide \$50,000 for the Department of Commerce to conduct an assessment on the potential benefits of using geothermal heat pumps — a technology that utilizes the constant temperature of the earth

to help heat and cool buildings.

The House Energy Finance and Policy Division laid the bill over Feb. 19 for possible inclusion in its omnibus energy finance bill. A companion, [SF474](#), sponsored by [Sen. Rick Olseen](#) (DFL-Harris), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

Also known as ground-source heat pumps, geothermal heat pumps use a series of tubes buried underground to circulate a water and antifreeze mixture that transfers heat between buildings and the earth. The bill would commission a study of the potential environmental and economic benefits of using the technology in both newly constructed and retrofitted residential, commercial and institutional buildings.

Bob Donely, sales supervisor for the geothermal heat pump manufacturer ECONAR, said that his growing industry has been around for several decades but is only just now becoming widely known.

"There are definite barriers to promoting this industry. It's a very small industry. ... Even the largest manufacturer in the U.S. employs about 300 employees," Donely said.

John Wayne Barker, executive director of Merrick Inc., a nonprofit that provides vocational opportunities to developmentally disabled adults, said that his organization retrofitted its building with a geothermal system and saw cost savings almost immediately. He supports the bill because it would provide businesses with a reliable set of data about the cost impacts of employing the technology.

— N. BUSSE

Renewable energy standard

Minnesota now has the most aggressive renewable energy standard in the United States, thanks to a new law sponsored by [Rep. Aaron Peterson](#) (DFL-Appleton) and [Sen. Ellen Anderson](#) (DFL-St. Paul).

The law, signed Feb. 22 by Gov. Tim Pawlenty, will gradually increase the percentage of the state's electricity that comes from wind, solar, hydroelectric and other renewable sources to 25 percent by 2025. Xcel Energy, the state's biggest power company, faces a tougher requirement of 30 percent by 2020.

Peterson said the law will not only mandate cleaner energy production, but also serve as an economic engine for rural Minnesota by enticing wind turbine manufacturers to the state.

"Right now, Minnesota imports more electricity than any other state. We need to keep more of our money at home, with an industry that will bring jobs and economic

Signed
by
the
governor

benefits to rural areas,” Peterson said.

The law grants authority to the [Public Utilities Commission](#) to enforce compliance, and also directs power companies to consult with the commission on a plan to make the necessary modifications to the state’s electric transmission infrastructure. It also includes a provision for a flexible renewable energy credit system, whereby companies that cannot meet the standard can purchase credits from companies that exceed them.

During discussion on the House floor, Feb. 19, [House Minority Leader Marty Seifert](#) (R-Marshall) called the bill a “compromise that most people can live with,” but also suggested that more emphasis should be placed in the future on energy conservation. He thanked Pawlenty for his “great leadership” in pushing for renewable energy.

[House Majority Leader Tony Sertich](#) (DFL-Chisholm) praised the bill, and also offered assurances that it was “not the last you’ve heard on the issue of energy” from the House this session.

The law is effective Aug. 1, 2007.

[HF4/SF4](#)*/CH3

—N. BUSSE

* Denotes the file submitted to the governor.

ENVIRONMENT

Great Lakes compact signed

Signed
by
the
governor

Minnesota is officially the first state to approve a Great Lakes water usage compact more than six years in the making.

A new law signed Feb. 20 by Gov. Tim Pawlenty ratifies 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. Such diversions can have significant environmental and economic impacts.

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 the seven other states, ratified by the U.S. Congress, and then agreed to by Canadian authorities.

Sponsored by [Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) and [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), the compact also establishes that the states and 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.

Speaking on the House floor Feb. 1, Huntley noted that all of the restrictions placed on water usage by the compact would be less restrictive than what is currently in Minnesota law.

[HF110](#)*/[SF38](#)/CH2

—N. BUSSE

* Denotes the file submitted to the governor.

GAME & FISH

Deer for the hungry

A House division approved a bill that would add a \$1 surcharge to all deer hunting licenses to help hunters donate their deer to food assistance programs for the needy.

[HF278](#), sponsored by [Rep. Rick Hansen](#) (DFL-South St. Paul), was approved Feb. 19 by the House Game, Fish and Forestry Division, and now goes to the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee. A companion, [SF399](#), sponsored by [Sen. Sharon Erickson Ropes](#) (DFL-Winona), awaits action by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

Under the bill, proceeds from the surcharge would be collected by the Department of Natural Resources and diverted to the Department of Agriculture, which would then use the funds to reimburse processors who prepare donated deer for distribution to food banks.

Newell Searle, vice president of external relations for Second Harvest Heartland, said the bill would kill two birds with one stone: controlling the deer population and feeding the hungry.

“Meat is a product that is not donated in large quantities, typically, to food banks,” Searle said, adding that venison has a high nutritional value and is low in cholesterol.

Thomas Keliher, a lobbyist representing the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, said the association opposes the bill because of the mandatory \$1 fee, and that such a program would be better funded through General Fund appropriations or simply through private donations.

“If you choose to donate and help out with these situations, you should just go ahead and do so out of your own pocket,” Keliher said. He added that the association would support a “voluntary check-off” on deer license applications to donate money for the program.

Ed Boggess, deputy director of the DNR’s Fish and Wildlife Division, said the department had concerns that diverting license fees into other agencies might affect federal matching funds that are contingent on license fees being

used within the department. Hansen said he is willing to work on the bill’s language with the DNR.

— N. BUSSE

Animal noise callers

Hunters could be allowed to use radio-controlled animal noise callers to hunt certain animals.

[HF343](#), sponsored by [Rep. Tony Cornish](#) (R-Good Thunder), was held over Feb. 19 by the House Game, Fish and Forestry Division for possible inclusion into its omnibus bill. Its companion, [SF142](#), sponsored by [Sen. Kathy Sheran](#) (DFL-Mankato), awaits action by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

Currently, Minnesota law does not allow hunters to use radio equipment to hunt game. The bill would create a specific exemption for hunters who use wireless remote-controlled callers to hunt foxes and coyotes.

[Rep. Jean Wagenius](#) (DFL-Mpls) expressed concern that such devices might unintentionally lure domestic pets and other nongame animals into hunters’ sights.

“What about other things that will come? I mean, my beagle would run to that noise,” Wagenius said.

Cornish said that in his experience, hunters have no problem identifying and avoiding dogs and other unwanted animals that might run in after a decoy.

[Rep. David Dill](#) (DFL-Crane Lake), division chairman, clarified that similar devices controlled through a wire rather than radio-controlled are already legally used for such purposes.

— N. BUSSE

GOVERNMENT

An end to a department

The [Department of Employee Relations](#) would be eliminated, under a bill approved by the House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee Feb. 20.

Sponsored by [Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.](#) (DFL-Winona), [HF1048](#) would abolish the department as of June 1, 2008, and transfer the duties to the Finance, Administration and Health departments.

The bill, which next goes to the House Finance Committee, is an attempt to consolidate resources in state government and has bipartisan support, Pelowski said.

“We do have complete support with most of the employee unions,” Commissioner Patricia Anderson said, indicating there wouldn’t be any job losses, but some job descriptions could change.

Pelowski successfully amended the bill to include union language for worker protection so that “no employee in the classified service shall suffer job loss, have a salary reduced, or have employment benefits reduced as a result of a reorganization mandated or recommended.”

[Rep. Tom Emmer](#) (R-Delano) said the added language doesn’t allow for reducing the size of government when jobs are not reduced.

“If you don’t take some small steps, it’s difficult to do,” Pelowski said. Sharing resources in the long run gets a much “bigger bang” for the tax dollar.

A companion bill, [SF887](#), sponsored by [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), awaits action in the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

— P. OSTBERG

Google government

The public would be able to search state contracts via a Web site, under a bill approved by the House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee Feb. 20.

Sponsored by [Rep. Erik Paulsen](#) (R-Eden Prairie), [HF376](#) would require the state to maintain a searchable database with information on state contracts, including grants, which would provide how much has been appropriated and the source of the funds.

The proposal is an attempt to create more transparency in government, Paulsen said. There was no opposition to the bill, which next goes to the House Finance Committee.

Jim Rhodes, legislative director with the [Department of Administration](#), said some of the requirements in the bill carry a large price tag. Additionally, providing contract information going back 10 years for areas such as the [Department of Transportation](#) could be difficult.

Although the bill currently would require a 10-year history, Paulsen said he would work on changing some of the language so the Web site can be implemented more quickly.

Marcia Avner, public policy director for the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, said the Web site would create a better understanding of where money is going.

A companion bill, [SF416](#), sponsored by [Sen. Ann Rest](#) (DFL-New Hope), awaits action in the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

— P. OSTBERG

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Funding regional emergency services

Regional emergency medical services, which have been financially strangled by steady declines in seatbelt fine revenues since 2000, may finally get the boost they need.

Sponsored by [Rep. Frank Moe](#) (DFL-Bemidji), [HF688](#) requests \$800,000 for the Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board, which, in turn, would apply all monies across all eight EMS regions.

Moe told members of the House Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health Finance Division Feb. 21 that funding would help update equipment, facilitate better coordination and public education, provide training, re-staff programs and ensure quality. The proposal is to be considered for the division’s omnibus bill.

Emergency medical services provide ambulance and emergency response, first responder and disaster response. A large portion of their funding is derived from seatbelt penalties, which, due to greater public compliance, have decreased by 15 percent over the past five years.

A companion bill, [SF637](#), sponsored by [Sen. Paul Koering](#) (R-Fort Ripley), awaits action by the Senate Health, Housing and Family Security Committee.

— M. SIMPSON

Tougher exams for X-ray operators

While testifying for her bill Feb. 19, [Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba](#) (DFL-Long Prairie) shared a health care experience.

“The first X-ray found nothing,” she said. They then went to a second hospital, where doctors misdiagnosed the problem. A visit to a third hospital yielded a correct diagnosis, but missed the severity. “And then (we) went to Rochester and found out it was really bad.”

Otremba was talking to members of the House Licensing Subcommittee about her husband, and said [HF645](#), which would modify examination requirements for anyone operating X-ray machines starting January 2008, might help ensure better consistency among those tests for others.

The bill attempts to standardize the skill level for all new professionals performing X-rays. It would require full-time operators to take a nationally-recognized exam and applies more stringent testing standards, which would be approved by the health commissioner, for limited X-ray operators.

The legislation also prohibits limited operators from performing certain diagnostic tests.

Advocates argue that the state’s current exams

do not evaluate enough facets of X-ray operation to ensure consistently good pictures.

“This test does not include anatomy or pathology; how to properly position the patient; or what exposure factors to use in order to obtain a diagnostic X-ray,” said Linda Coster, a radiologist.

The bill, which will be considered for the subcommittee’s omnibus bill, does not apply to current operators or those licensed to practice medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic, podiatry or dentistry and certified dental assistants.

A companion bill, [SF445](#), sponsored by [Sen. Michelle Fischbach](#) (R-Paynesville), awaits action by the Senate Health, Housing and Family Security Committee.

— M. SIMPSON

Remembering with dignity

For years, state hospitals and institutions used makeshift numbered markers, in the form of wooden or iron stakes, concrete blocks or cement-filled coffee cans, as gravestones for patients who had died in care.

Earl Karsikas told the House Health Care and Human Services Finance Division Feb. 21, that his grandfather, who spent years in a state institution in Hastings, was one such man.

“My grandfather was eventually forgotten by his family, and then he was forgotten by the state,” he said.

Sponsored by [Rep. Patti Fritz](#) (DFL-Faribault), [HF760](#) would appropriate \$400,000 to Remembering With Dignity, a project attempting to remark these graves. It would be the third time in 10 years the effort would receive state money.

“We couldn’t do this without state funding,” said Jim Fassett-Carman, a project organizer. “And we feel strongly that the state is responsible.”

Fassett-Carman said there are, at a minimum, 12,740 unmarked or unnumbered graves of Minnesota state hospital residents. He estimated it would cost more than \$2 million to supply headstones with a name, birth date and date of death for the deceased.

Recipients must also “collaborate with community groups and state and local government agencies to build community involvement and public awareness, ensure public access to the graves, and ensure appropriate perpetual maintenance of state cemeteries.”

The bill was held over for consideration in the division’s omnibus bill.

A companion bill, [SF676](#), sponsored by [Sen. Tony Lourey](#) (DFL-Kerrick), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

— M. SIMPSON

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

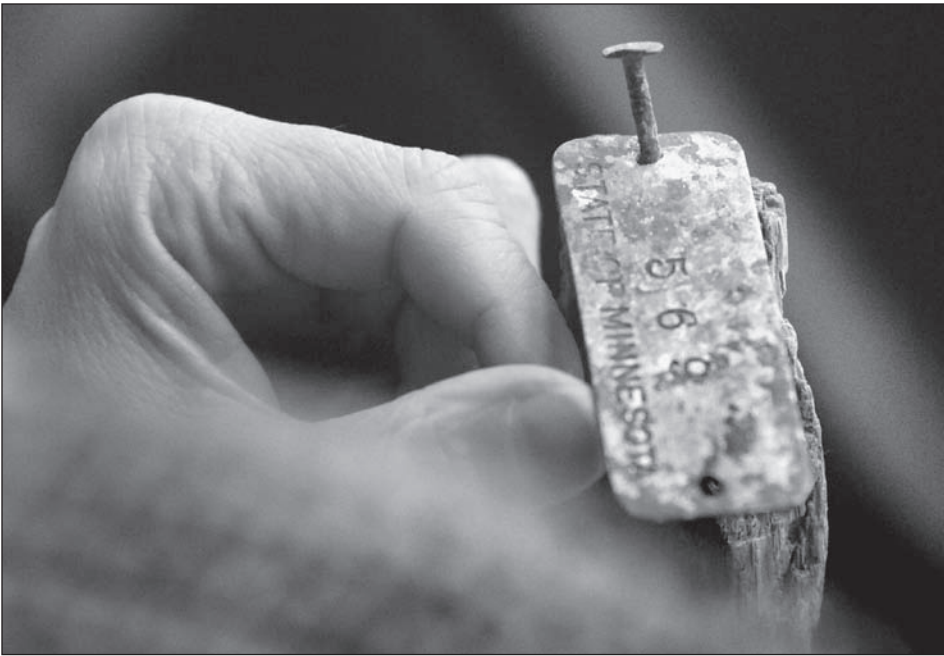


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Diane Loeffler examines an old grave marker, consisting of a number nailed to a wooden stake, passed around to members of the House Health Care and Human Services Finance Division Feb. 21 during testimony on a bill that would provide funding for the Remembering With Dignity project.

— M. SIMPSON

Expanded insurance for young adults

People between the ages 18-25 are often least likely to be covered by medical insurance.

Sponsored by [Rep. Diane Loeffler](#) (DFL-Mpls), HF475 could be a boon for those young adults because it would grant them longer access to their parents' health plan.

The bill, approved by the House Health and Human Services Committee Feb. 20 and sent to the House Commerce and Labor Committee, would amend, for the purposes of private health care coverage, the definition of dependents to include anyone under age 25. Under current law, family coverage extends only to full-time or disabled students under age 25 and unmarried teens younger than 19.

Loeffler argued the legislation was good public policy because it would help reduce the number of uninsured, promote continuity of care, offer options for students forced out of school due to disability or illness, and potentially reduce higher education costs in schools that mandate health care plans for students.

"I was quite amazed while door-knocking this past year how frequently this came up," [Rep. Julie Bunn](#) (DFL-Lake Elmo) said. Many middle- and upper-middle class families in her district told her about gaps in coverage for children this age, many of whom were underemployed college graduates.

Other members worried that broadening access might inadvertently increase overall premium costs, or worse, some joked, keep young adults in the nest too long.

A companion bill, [SF816](#), sponsored by [Sen. Linda Higgins](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee.

— M. SIMPSON

Helping those suffering mental illness

After 29 years of law enforcement, Sharon Lubinski, an assistant chief with the Minneapolis Police Department, reached a sobering conclusion.

"I think society, quite frankly, does not take good care of mentally-ill people," she said. "Then the police department becomes the safety net, and we are not a good safety net when it comes to mentally-ill people."

She was speaking to members of the House Mental Health Division about one aspect of [HF196](#), specifically an expansion of Crisis Intervention Team Programs, which train police officers to better respond to calls involving the mentally ill.

After two days of hearings, the bill, which seeks to affect nearly all facets of mental health services, was held over Feb. 16 for further discussion.

Sponsored by [Rep. Mindy Greiling](#) (DFL-Roseville), the legislation would involve corrections by requiring assessments for certain defendants and segregated or confined inmates, as well as providing funds for specific reentry projects and discharge planning.

The bill would touch children and families by appropriating money to related collaborative services, suicide prevention

programs, foster care training and to grants for teen screen programs and mental health services, while increasing reimbursement rates for respite care and a variety of mental health care professionals.

It would also help recipients of government-sponsored health care by expanding coverage to more mental health services, increasing reimbursement rates for providers, eliminating co-pays and authorizing a study of the relationship between Minnesota Family Investment Program participants' employment success and children's mental health needs.

"This was meant to be an umbrella bill that did include everything anyone could think of in the mental health network...this was not to be the frugal bill," Greiling said.

No fiscal note was available for the bill.

A companion bill, [SF148](#), sponsored by [Sen. John Marty](#) (DFL-Roseville), awaits action by the Senate Health, Housing and Family Security Committee.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Tuition fairness

At the [University of Minnesota](#), a Wisconsin student is paying less in tuition and in fees than his or her Minnesota counterpart.

[Rep. Thomas Huntley](#) (DFL-Duluth) and a number of other legislators do not think this is fair.

Huntley sponsors [HF398](#), which was held over Feb. 21 by the House Higher Education and Work Force Development Policy and Finance Division for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

It would change the reciprocity agreement between the two states so that Wisconsin students attending the university would pay the Minnesota resident tuition rate. The change would be phased in over two years beginning in the fall of 2007.

"The difference between what Wisconsin reciprocity students pay and Minnesota residents pay to attend one of our four campuses has simply grown to the point that it is ridiculous. It's not a situation we believe any other state would tolerate," said Peter Zetterberg, senior vice president of academic affairs in the university's Office of Institutional Research and Reporting.

Under the current reciprocity agreement, a student pays the tuition and fees of a comparable institution in their home state. Because Wisconsin's state resident rate is less expensive, a Wisconsin student could pay significantly less. For example, a Minnesotan

at the University of Minnesota-Duluth pays \$1,700 more than a student who resides across the harbor in Superior, Wis. At the Morris campus, the difference is \$2,700, Zetterberg said.

Agreements with North Dakota, South Dakota and Manitoba call for the student to pay the higher of the two in-state rates at a comparable campus.

Using a formula that includes instructional costs, the state with the greater net state obligation pays the other state the difference between the net state obligations.

Susan Heegaard, director of the [Office of Higher Education](#), said that they are attempting to renegotiate the reciprocity agreement with Wisconsin, and hope to have a response to a November offer yet this month.

A companion bill, [SF307](#), sponsored by [Sen. Yvonne Prettnner Solon](#) (DFL-Duluth), awaits action by the Senate Higher Education Budget and Policy Division.

— M. COOK

HUMANITIES

Indigenous Language Council

With fewer than 15 people in the state fluent in speaking Dakota, teachers say now is the time to save the language.

“We only have 10 years to save the language,” said Margaret Boyer, a member of the Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals. “Every week an elder dies.”

Sponsored by [Rep. David Bly](#) (DFL-Northfield), [HF779](#) would establish the Minnesota Indigenous Language Act and the Council on Indigenous Language to help ensure the survival of American Indian culture and languages. The bill was approved Feb. 19 by the House Minnesota Heritage Finance Division and sent to the House Finance Committee.

A companion bill, [SF586](#), sponsored by [Sen. Patricia Torres Ray](#) (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

Boyer said children have to be immersed in the language for 11 years in order for it to stick with them for life. She added that these native languages are not like others. A person can travel to France, for example, and have total immersion to learn the language, but Minnesota is the home of Dakota and Ojibwe.

John Poupart, president of the American Indian Policy Center and member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Chippewa, said the stories, legends and spirituality of his tribe have been conveyed for generations through



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

Liela Goggleye, left, and Betty Jane Schaaf testify before the Minnesota Heritage Finance Division on Feb. 19 in support of HF779, which would provide funding for Indigenous languages. Both women represent the Native American Leader Circle, a leadership project of the Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals.

the language and by word of mouth.

“All of the knowledge is contained by word of mouth,” he said. “Nothing was written. This is why we stay committed to our elders and the language.”

— S. HEGMAN

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Protecting resorts

A bill approved by a House committee aims to protect resort owners from local ordinances that might prevent them from maintaining their buildings.

[HF849](#), sponsored by [Rep. Frank Moe](#) (DFL-Bemidji), was approved Feb. 20 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee. The bill would allow resort

owners to perform maintenance on existing structures and replace damaged or destroyed structures as long as their establishments continued to operate as resorts.

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

“We want to preempt local zoning,” said Joel Carlson, a lobbyist representing the Congress of Minnesota Resorts. “We need to have these tools to remain viable.”

[Rep. Dennis Ozment](#) (R-Rosemount) said

he thinks the bill's definition of resort is "too loose" and that nonresort owners could abuse the bill's provisions for their own purposes.

Terry Neff, director of environmental services for Aitkin County, said he is concerned that the bill has no provisions allowing for nonconforming structures to be brought into compliance with local building codes.

The bill now goes to the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee, where Moe expects more of the details will be worked out in the bill.

A companion, [SF961](#), sponsored by [Sen. Dan Skogen](#) (DFL-Hewitt), awaits action by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

— N. BUSSE

MILITARY

Education assistance

Two similar bills are competing to be part of a comprehensive program to provide education benefits to veterans. But one bill's sponsor cautions that the other bill's \$50 million price tag could, if included, doom to failure an omnibus veterans bill.

Known as the Minnesota GI Bill, [HF162](#), sponsored by [Rep. Larry Haws](#) (DFL-St. Cloud), reflects the ideas of the Military Action Group, a consortium of veterans organizations that have been working on veterans-related legislation during the last few years. This proposal caught the attention of the governor and is funded at \$30 million in his budget proposal.

[Rep. Bernard Lieder](#) (DFL-Crookston), on the other hand, sponsors [HF533](#) — the Veterans' Tuition Assistance Act — a proposal the attorney general's office brought forward in December. Although Lieder's delete-all amendment brought his bill's language closer to Haws', its price tag is estimated at \$50 million.

Both bills were approved by the House Veterans Affairs Division Feb. 16, and sent to the House Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Finance Division.

Under consideration is a \$1,000 tuition assistance program at any Minnesota post-secondary institution for veterans, and spouses and children of deceased or permanently disabled veterans. It is how the \$1,000 grant eligibility is calculated that differs.

"This is a mature bill, developed over the last two years," Haws said. "It is built to meet the total package, so that it works. I beg ... to bring these two bills together for a bill that serves the heroes that we want to serve."

"This (HF533) represents a compromise that was worked out in the Senate between the



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

With Rep. Dan Severson listening, Sally Jaranson of Bemidji gives emotional testimony before the House Veterans Affairs Division Feb. 16 in support of a bill that would establish a Minnesota GI Bill program to provide post-secondary education assistance to veterans.

governor's and attorney general's proposals," said Ben Wogsland, assistant director of communications and research for the attorney general's office.

Sally Jaranson of Bemidji said her son has been in the National Guard for over three years, and may not be eligible for any GI Bill benefits, under current federal regulations. "I am thankful that you people have taken the time to look out for these guys," she said.

The companion bills, [SF253](#) sponsored by [Sen. Ann Lynch](#) (DFL-Rochester), and [SF408](#), sponsored by [Sen. Sharon Erickson Ropes](#) (DFL-Winona), have been referred, to the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.

— L. SCHUTZ

TAXES

Cosmetic taxes

Those wanting Botox injections could find the procedure subject to sales tax beginning in July.

Sponsored by [Rep. Phyllis Kahn](#) (DFL-Mpls), [HF1027](#) was held over by the House Taxes Committee Feb. 19 for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill. It has no Senate companion.

The bill would impose the state's general sales tax on cosmetic surgery, cosmetic

injections, various cosmetic laser treatments, hair transplants and cosmetic dentistry. The tax would not apply to reconstructive surgery or dentistry performed because of congenital defects, development abnormalities or other procedures to improve function or give a more normal appearance. The sales tax would likely create \$7.7 million in fiscal year 2008 and \$9.9 million by 2011.

"We have an eroding sales tax base because we're not taxing services," said [Rep. Ann Lenczewski](#) (DFL-Bloomington), committee chairwoman.

New Jersey is the only state to impose a cosmetic tax so far, Kahn said. The language for her bill was taken from that law. Many members said the language needs to be clarified before it can move forward.

[Rep. Joe Atkins](#) (DFL-Inver Grove Heights) said the tax exemption section of the bill provides a loophole for the taxed services section of the bill.

"The 'more normal appearance' is in the eye of the beholder," he said. "What is a normal appearance? Who would decide it would improve appearance?"

Kahn said Botox and lip injections are not needed to provide what is considered a "normal appearance."

"It's like art," she said of necessary procedures. "You know it when you see it."

— S. HEGMAN

Local sales tax bumps

Local governments are generally prohibited from imposing sales taxes unless they receive authorization by the Legislature.

Representatives from North Mankato, Emily and Cloquet argued their case for a local sales tax to the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 19. [HF108](#), [HF442](#) and [HF885](#), sponsored, respectively, by Reps. [Terry Morrow](#) (DFL-St. Peter), [Larry Howes](#) (R-Walker) and [Bill Hilty](#) (DFL-Finlayson), were referred to the House Taxes Committee without recommendation.

North Mankato Mayor Gary Zellner said the 0.5 percent sales tax would generate \$6 million for improvements to local highways, parks and public libraries, and continued riverfront development. Residents approved the sales tax in November 2006 general election.

Emily wants the 0.5 percent sales tax to pay for a wastewater system installed seven years ago. City Councilmember Kent Rees said that the nearly \$1.64 million to be raised would pay for the loan needed to complete the project. Residents also approved this increase in the last general election.

Voters in Cloquet have not yet considered a proposed 0.5 percent sales tax and \$20 per vehicle excise tax to fund various

capital projects and improvements. City Administrator Brian Fritsinger said that over the past six years, the loss of local government aid has hit his city hard, and this tax would relieve some of the pressure. Voter approval would be needed before the tax is imposed.

Companion bills to the Emily and Cloquet projects, [SF315](#) and [SF692](#), sponsored, respectively, by Sen. [Mary Olson](#) (DFL-Bemidji) and Sen. [Tony Lourey](#) (DFL-Kerrick), have been laid over by the Senate Taxes Committee for possible omnibus tax bill inclusion. A companion bill, [SF512](#), to the North Mankato bill is sponsored by Sen. [Kathy Sheran](#) (DFL-Mankato), and was laid over by the Senate Taxes Committee.

— C. GREEN

Lowering sales tax

Lowering the sales tax rate could have a big impact on the state's General Fund, and it could happen as soon as July.

Sponsored by [Rep. Chris DeLaForest](#) (R-Andover), [HF149](#) was held over Feb. 20 by the House Taxes Committee for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill. A companion bill, [SF240](#), sponsored by [Sen. Chris Gerlach](#) (R-Apple Valley), awaits action by the Senate Taxes Committee.

The bill would reduce the general sales and use tax by 0.5 percent to 6 percent. The loss of revenue in fiscal year 2008 is estimated to be \$315.6 million. The bill would also reduce the motor vehicle sales tax to 6 percent, which would create an expected loss of \$35.3 million in fiscal year 2008.

DeLaForest said it's important to look at the sales tax rate to give part of the budget surplus back to state residents.

"This is an opportunity to return it in some form," he said.

[Rep. Paul Marquart](#) (DFL-Dilworth) said the Legislature needs to balance the budget this year, but didn't like the idea of \$679 million being cut from the General Fund for the upcoming biennium.

"We don't want to go backward," DeLaForest said. "There could be other areas of savings."

He added, however, that he does not want sales tax added to the "staples of life," like clothing.

— S. HEGMAN

Tax modifications

Making permanent tax system changes is a top goal of the House Property Tax Relief and Local Sales Tax Division. Representatives got the ball rolling Feb. 16.

Identical bills sponsored by Reps. [Paul Marquart](#) (DFL-Dilworth) and [Will Morgan](#) (DFL-Burnsville), [HF3](#) and [HF157](#), would

modify provisions of the property tax system to provide relief to all residents of the state. These modifications would include: increasing county and city aid programs and indexing aid appropriations for inflation; increasing homestead and agricultural market value credits; reducing a number of school levies and indexing school aid formulas for changes in property values; expanding the homeowner and renter property tax refund programs; and expanding eligibility for the senior deferral program.

Each bill would take effect in fiscal year 2009 and provide \$63.7 million in property tax relief, and as much as \$156.3 million by fiscal year 2011 based on inflation.

Since 2002, property taxes across the state have increased by \$2.2 billion, a 48 percent increase, which equals about \$1,300 per family, Marquart said. School levies have increased \$814 million, an 80 percent increase. The bills contain provisions to restore local government aid, county program aid cuts and the market value homestead credits in hopes of creating more permanent property tax relief.

The bills were held over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

A companion to Marquart's bill, [SF349](#), sponsored by [Sen. Dan Larson](#) (DFL-Bloomington), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee. Morgan's bill does not have a Senate companion.

— S. HEGMAN

TRANSPORTATION

Funding concerns from Congress

In the Land of 10,000 Lakes, travelers are likely to utilize a transportation system that is nowhere near as ultimate as it could be.

"The problem is the billions in under-investment every year," said [Sen. Steve Murphy](#) (DFL-Red Wing). "We need to get real money on the table. ... If we want to get past where we are at, we need real resources not funny money."

At the federal level, the state has its biggest transportation ally in years; but now it is up to the state.

"If Minnesota doesn't get busy, it will not be able to match the \$4.3 billion in federal highway trust fund monies available to Minnesota under the law," [U.S. Rep. James Oberstar](#) (D-Minn.), chair of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, told a joint meeting of the House Transportation Finance Division and Senate Transportation Budget and Policy Division Feb. 20. No action was taken.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

U.S. Rep. James Oberstar, chair of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, shared his thoughts on state transportation funding at a Feb. 20 joint meeting of the House Transportation Finance Division and Senate Transportation Budget and Policy Division.

The law he referred to is the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, better known as SAFETEA-LU, which authorizes transportation program funding for fiscal years 2005 through 2009. Under the act, Oberstar said, the state received a 46.1 percent funding increase over previous federal legislation.

Generally, the federal government pays 80 percent of a project's cost and the state covers 20 percent, under the law.

But, where would more state money come from?

Oberstar supported the amendment on last year's ballot to dedicate all funds from the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax to transit funding, but said it is not enough.

"The last time we had a gas tax increase in Minnesota was 1988, and it was 3 cents," he said. Since then, the tax has remained the same, but miles traveled on state roadways have increased by 50 percent, to 56.9 billion miles.

By increasing the tax by a nickel per gallon, Oberstar said it would raise \$161 million for the state.

A bill that contained a 10-cent gas tax increase was vetoed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty two years ago.

— M. COOK

Suburban rejuvenator

Morgan wants to take advantage of where the 'I's cross

By **LEE ANN SCHUTZ**

Rep. Will Morgan (DFL-Burnsville) wants the area he represents to be the best place to work and raise a family. But as with other "aging" suburbs, it faces issues with its "aging" business centers, housing stock and population.



Rep. Will Morgan

As a House member, he sees his role as one of helping city and school leaders facilitate the goal of "rejuvenation" — revitalizing business areas, improving the transportation corridor and maintaining property values. Morgan said that Burnsville's strategic location within the Twin Cities metropolitan area makes it a desirable place to locate. Quoting Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, and referring to the intersection of

Interstates 35E and 35W, he said, "It's where the 'I's cross. We are the first city south of the river. And as we plan for the future, we need to really take advantage of that, especially for business redevelopment."

But it is the people who make up any community, he said, and it takes more than a good location to attract and keep residents. It takes a diversified, well-maintained housing stock, a good transportation system and good schools.

Morgan is pleased with his committee and division assignments: House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee, where he serves as vice chairman; and the House Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health; K-12; and Transportation finance divisions.

"They really tie together. Good schools make sure that families have good home values; public health means kids are showing up ready to learn; transportation means

DISTRICT 40A
2002 population: 36,882
Largest city: Burnsville
Counties: Dakota and Scott
Top concerns: Property taxes, education, health care and transportation

people can get to and from work easily. ... I just like the idea of working on the whole community, particularly in those areas," he said.

A physics and chemistry teacher at Burnsville High School since 1991, Morgan said quality education, along with retaining quality educators in the schools are obvious concerns. He has been active in his local teachers union, acting as chief negotiator for the last three contracts.

This was Morgan's second run for a House seat. "All my adult life I have been a public servant. This is an opportunity for me to serve the public in a different way."

An educator with passion

Swails continues her public service

By **PATTY OSTBERG**

Not many people can say they grew up just streets away from a former U.S. president, but **Rep. Marsha Swails** (DFL-Woodbury) can.



Rep. Marsha Swails

As a junior high school student in Independence, Mo. her school bus drove by Harry Truman's house every day. Looking out the left side window she would see him sitting at his desk in front of his picture window writing

or reading.

That accessibility left a lasting impression.

"I never felt that public service was something odd to pursue," said Swails, who believes the greatest thing a person can do is serve others.

A teacher for 22 years, including as an

Advanced Placement English instructor since 1999, her political aspirations emerged when she attended her first district caucus during the 2004 elections. Surrounded by neighbors with similar political passions, she said they encouraged her to run for office. Swails didn't want to give up teaching so she spoke with several legislators who were also teachers. They convinced her it's possible to do both.

"All my life I've felt that serving others was what I should do ... I see this as an extension of that core value," said Swails, the 2004 Woodbury Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year.

After hours of door-knocking and meeting thousands of constituents, she defeated incumbent Rep. Karen Klinzing, also a teacher, by 2.3 percent of the vote.

Swails said the issues most important to her district include quality education for children, affordable health care and transportation.

DISTRICT 56B
2002 population: 36,683
Largest city: Woodbury
County: Washington
Top concern: Education

There are simple fixes for transportation, even if that means rescheduling a few bus routes. "They don't have to be multimillion dollar road projects or light-rail, but we can implement short-term solutions to make lives better," Swails said.

Her background as a teacher makes her well-suited for her seats on the House E-12 Education Committee and the K-12 Finance Division.

Her other committee assignments include Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health Finance Division, Labor and Consumer Protection Division, and she is vice chairwoman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Monday, February 19

HF1063-Simon (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Uniform Environmental Covenants Act adopted.

HF1064-Thao (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Human services disqualification set-asides modified relating to child and day care service licenses.

HF1065-Otremba (DFL)
Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs
Health screening benefit provided for eligible members of the armed forces and notification required.

HF1066-Fritz (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Blood donor age minimum lowered to 15 with parental consent.

HF1067-Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Mental health provisions modified, county board duties clarified, mental health service delivery reform provided, grants authorized, and medical assistance and MinnesotaCare coverage modified.

HF1068-Jaros (DFL)
Health & Human Services
St. Louis County group residential housing supplemental rates modified for a specified facility.

HF1069-Hornstein (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Hair transplant surgery facilities regulatory system established.

HF1070-Hilty (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence Act adopted providing public access to quality medical imaging procedures and radiation therapy procedures.

HF1071-Huntley (DFL)
Finance
Hearing aid and instrument loan bank established for infants and children who are deaf or who have a hearing loss.

HF1072-Liebling (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Mortuary science provisions modified.

HF1073-Hamilton (R)
Health & Human Services
Prescription drug removal from the formulary notice required.

HF1074-Ruud (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Darlene Luther Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act adopted.

HF1075-Anzelc (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Koochiching County nursing facility payment rates increased.

HF1076-Kahn (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Hospitals required to publicly report performance on prevention measures for hospital-acquired infections.

HF1077-Ruud (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Language interpreter services coverage required for health plan and medical assistance enrollees.

HF1078-Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Hospital public interest review and alternative approval process modified, and hospital accountability requirements established for tax purposes.

HF1079-Clark (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
Financial institutions prohibited from imposing a service charge to cash certain checks.

HF1080-Morgan (DFL)
E-12 Education
School district technology needs aid provided.

HF1081-Kalin (DFL)
Finance
Independent School District No. 138, North Branch, targeted all-day everyday kindergarten program established.

HF1082-Loeffler (DFL)
Finance
4-year-old kindergarten programs funding increased.

HF1083-Anzelc (DFL)
Finance
Maximum effort capital loan school district tax base modified to calculate debt service levies.

HF1084-Davnie (DFL)
Finance
Special education programs funding increased and restored.

HF1085-Howes (R)
Finance
Special education programs funding increased and restored.

HF1086-Davnie (DFL)
Finance
4-year-old students made eligible for extended time programs.

HF1087-Mullery (DFL)
E-12 Education
Teacher residency induction program provided supporting effective instruction for diverse student populations.

HF1088-Davnie (DFL)
E-12 Education
College in the schools program aid provided.

HF1089-Peterson, S. (DFL)
E-12 Education
Child care quality improved and professional development of child care practitioners expanded.

HF1090-Dettmer (R)
E-12 Education
Alternative teacher pay system expanded to include additional staff development opportunities.

HF1091-Peterson, S. (DFL)
E-12 Education
Supplemental education service providers approval rules modified.

HF1092-Anzelc (DFL)
E-12 Education
Online Learning Option Act modified.

HF1093-Hansen (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Environment & Natural Resources trust fund provisions modified, Clean Water Legacy and trust fund expenditures provided, state lottery in lieu tax disposition modified, money appropriated and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1094-Peterson, A. (DFL)
Finance
Cellulosic ethanol producer payment program established.

HF1095-Morrow (DFL)
Transportation Finance Division
Vehicle weights allowed on highways modified and seasonal restrictions on gravel roads extended.

HF1096-Clark (DFL)
Finance
Bridges rental housing assistance funding provided.

HF1097-Davnie (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Dependent definition modified relating to group benefits for local government officers and employees.

HF1098-Peterson, A. (DFL)
Finance
Geothermal investment loans revolving fund established.

HF1099-Peterson, A. (DFL)
Finance
Lewis and Clark Rural Water System grants appropriations converted from the bonds proceeds fund to the General Fund.

HF1100-Hornstein (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Teachers retirement association refund repayment cost specified and return of any overpayments required.

HF1101-Faust (DFL)
Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs
Recreational camping regulations exception provided for county fairgrounds.

HF1102-Hilty (DFL)
Finance
Fond du Lac Technical and Community College land acquisition funding provided.

HF1103-Moe (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Bemidji local sales and use tax extended.

HF1104-Laine (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
Rebate practices at retail establishments regulated.

HF1105-Laine (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Charter commission expense limitations increased for certain cities.

HF1106-Rukavina (DFL)
Finance
Virginia; B'nai Abraham Synagogue historical preservation funding provided.

HF1107-Bly (DFL)
Finance
Alternative livestock research and outreach funding provided to the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Minnesota.

HF1108-Gardner (DFL)
Taxes
Re-refined motor oils and recycled paper sales tax exemption provided.

HF1109-Thissen (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Evidentiary standards modified for post-conviction relief and scope of evidence retained expanded.

HF1110-Hilty (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Election definitions and procedures modified, complaint and resolution process established and penalties imposed.

HF1111-Rukavina (DFL)**Taxes**

Volunteer ambulance attendant and volunteer firefighter income tax credit provided.

HF1112-Madore (DFL)**Finance**

Transit fund established, metropolitan sales tax imposed and funds dedicated to transit, and motor vehicle sales tax revenues transferred.

HF1113-Wollschlager (DFL)**Taxes**

Property tax class rates increased on certain utility property.

HF1114-Ruud (DFL)**Taxes**

Sales tax exemption provided for sales of tangible personal property to fire departments.

HF1115-Norton (DFL)**Taxes**

Local Government Aid distribution mechanism amended to decrease volatility.

HF1116-Dill (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

Game and fish definitions, fees, license and stamp provisions, and possession and taking provisions modified; apprentice hunter validation provided; and criminal and civil penalties imposed.

HF1117-Simon (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Precinct caucuses moved from March to February, and state primary moved from September to June.

HF1118-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Predatory offender registration database checks required for persons booked at jails.

HF1119-Morrow (DFL)**Finance**

Nicollet County road reconstruction funding provided.

HF1120-Sailer (DFL)**Finance**

Independent School District No. 38, Red Lake, maximum effort capital loan provided.

HF1121-Morrow (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Emergency 911 data use permitted to notify the public of an emergency.

HF1122-Howes (R)

Environment & Natural Resources
Crow Wing County tax-forfeited land sales authorized.

HF1123-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Driving record information disclosure to law enforcement required.

HF1124-Loeffler (DFL)**Finance**

Lowry Avenue Bridge funding provided.

HF1125-Dettmer (R)**Taxes**

Class 4c property classification expanded to certain nonprofit community service-oriented organizations.

HF1126-Eken (DFL)**Finance**

Red River mediation implementation funding provided.

HF1127-Moe (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

4x4 truck trail development restricted.

HF1128-Moe (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

No net loss of forest land and hunting opportunities provided.

HF1129-Doty (DFL)**Taxes**

Senior citizens property tax deferral program modified.

HF1130-Nelson (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Police misconduct false reporting crime expanded.

HF1131-Moe (DFL)**Finance**

Capacity building grants funding provided.

HF1132-Atkins (DFL)**Taxes**

Sale of amusement devices provided as a sale for resale.

HF1133-Atkins (DFL)**Taxes**

Sales and purchase definition clarified to exclude the making available of amusement devices.

HF1134-Doty (DFL)**Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs**

Minnesota National Guard Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentality established.

HF1135-Pelowski (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Winona sales and use tax authorized.

HF1136-Atkins (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

Congress requested, by resolution, to limit fees and expiration dates associated with gift cards issued by federal banks.

HF1137-Davnie (DFL)**Finance**

Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis, bonding authority continued; and Independent School District No. 625, St. Paul, bonding authorization provided.

HF1138-Masin (DFL)**Taxes**

Legal reference and data center facility construction materials and equipment sales tax exemption provided.

HF1139-Murphy, M. (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Minnesota State Retirement System administrative changes provided.

HF1140-Faust (DFL)**Finance**

County and district agricultural societies funding provided.

HF1141-Emmer (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Hennepin and Wright counties change of boundaries by resolution authorized.

HF1142-Atkins (DFL)**Finance**

Higher education state grant program modified.

HF1143-Morrow (DFL)**Finance**

Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board funding provided.

HF1144-Atkins (DFL)**Taxes**

Printing industry capital equipment sales tax exemption provided.

HF1145-Peterson, A. (DFL)**Finance**

Geothermal energy incentives established.

HF1146-Murphy, M. (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

County jail reentry projects authorized.

HF1147-Sailer (DFL)**Finance**

Independent School District No. 38, Red Lake, security improvements funding provided.

HF1148-Thao (DFL)**Finance**

Asian-American juvenile crime prevention grants provided.

HF1149-Morrow (DFL)**Finance**

Rural Policy and Development Center fund grant provided.

HF1150-Morrow (DFL)**Finance**

Rural Policy and Development Center funding provided.

HF1151-Swails (DFL)**Finance**

Minnesota Learning Resource Center funding provided.

HF1152-Garofalo (R)**Taxes**

Animal shelters pet sales exempted from sales tax.

HF1153-Sertich (DFL)**Finance**

Independent School District No. 698, Floodwood, fund transfer authorized.

HF1154-Olin (DFL)**Finance**

Minnesota Public Radio, Inc., and public educational radio stations funding provided.

HF1155-Madore (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Statewide self-advocacy network project established relating to intellectual and developmental disabilities.

HF1156-Hilstrom (DFL)**Taxes**

Vending machine products sales tax exemption provided for specified foods.

HF1157-Haws (DFL)**Agriculture, Rural Economies & Veterans Affairs**

Minnesota "Support Our Troops" account fund uses expanded.

HF1158-Lesch (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

One-week waiting period for eligibility for unemployment benefits eliminated.

HF1159-Hornstein (DFL)**Transportation Finance Division**

Transportation Advisory Board membership modified, metropolitan area transportation evaluation provisions modified and special transportation service clarified.

HF1160-Hilstrom (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Local governments and school districts post-employment benefits trusts authorized.

HF1161-Kohls (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Scott County Housing and Redevelopment Authority renamed the Scott County Community Development Agency.

HF1162-Morrow (DFL)**Transportation Finance Division**

Single vehicle length limit increased.

HF1163-Kahn (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Freedom to Breathe Act of 2007 adopted establishing public policy to protect employees and the general public from the known hazards of secondhand smoke, and requiring persons to refrain from smoking in certain areas.

HF1164-Westrom (R)**Commerce & Labor**

Plumbing plan review requirements modified.

HF1165-Hilstrom (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

Purse set-aside and breeder's fund revenue sharing provided, and simulating and card club restrictions modified.

HF1166-Haws (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Motor vehicle hit-and-run petty misdemeanor imposed for certain offenses.

HF1167-Lillie (DFL)**Taxes**

North St. Paul tax increment financing district transfers authorized and time period to expend revenues extended.

HF1168-Haws (DFL)**Finance**

Minnesota Youth Program funding provided.

HF1169-Walker (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Child welfare provisions modified.

HF1170-Hausman (DFL)**Finance**

Living-at-home/block nurse programs grant amounts increased and indexed, number of programs increased and grant administration funding provided.

HF1171-Davnie (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Labor and Industry Department data practices provisions modified.

HF1172-Wollschlaeger (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Revenue Department debt collection time limits, collection costs and referrals provisions modified.

HF1173-Hornstein (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Metropolitan Council labor relations data classified as nonpublic.

HF1174-Dominguez (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Minnesota reading corps program established.

HF1175-Murphy, M. (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Aircraft facilities state financing modified to allow flexibility in obtaining a new lessee for a facility.

HF1176-Clark (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Public school admission for students over age 21 allowed.

HF1177-Erickson (R)**E-12 Education**

School districts may voluntarily implement an integration plan (clarification).

HF1178-Lillie (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Driver's license endorsement required to operate three-wheeled motorcycle.

HF1179-Slocum (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Education commissioner directed to report summary data on student performance and other student information.

HF1180-Hausman (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Surviving spouse benefit eligibility specified from the Minneapolis Firefighters Relief Association.

HF1181-Kahn (DFL)**Finance**

Non-commercial television grants money appropriated.

HF1182-Loeffler (DFL)**Taxes**

Homestead property taxes limited for persons at least age 65 to a percentage of income under certain conditions.

HF1183-Loeffler (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

Community forest management provided and forest and shade tree pest control provided.

HF1184-Peterson, S. (DFL)**E-12 Education**

New teachers induction program established.

HF1185-Davnie (DFL)**Finance**

School districts and intermediate school districts building lease levy increased.

HF1186-Greiling (DFL)**Finance**

Collaborative urban educator recruitment and training programs grants authorized.

HF1187-Laine (DFL)**Finance**

Minnesota Learning Resource Center money appropriated.

HF1188-Scalze (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

Protection of ecological value and riparian rights in issuing aquatic farm licenses provided.

HF1189-Thissen (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Licensed health care professional definition added and licensing provisions for physical therapists modified.

HF1190-Nelson (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

Plumbing council established.

HF1191-Olson (R)**Finance**

Department of Transportation; property appraisal requirements amended.

HF1192-Eken (DFL)**Finance**

Small schools revenue created as a component of general education revenue.

HF1193-Sailer (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Beltrami County; Office of County Recorder appointment process provided.

HF1194-Hausman (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Coverage of glucose test strips without a prescription permitted.

HF1195-Mariani (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Teacher center required to provide a professional development program for teachers in science and mathematics.

HF1196-Slawik (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Pre-kindergarten children with disabilities special instruction provided.

HF1197-Mariani (DFL)**E-12 Education**

Pre-kindergarten through grade 12 education provided including general education, education excellence, special programs, technology, nutrition and accounting, libraries, early childhood education, self-sufficiency and lifelong learning.

HF1198-Mariani (DFL)**Finance**

Limited English proficiency programs five-year limit on funding removed.

HF1199-Rukavina (DFL)**Finance**

State involvement in trade policies provided and report required.

HF1200-Kranz (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Revisor's bill correcting erroneous, ambiguous and omitted text and obsolete references; and making technical corrections.

HF1201-Garofalo (R)**Transportation Finance Division**

I-35E speed limit designated in St. Paul.

HF1202-Juhnke (DFL)**Finance**

Environment, natural resources and agriculture funding provided, revenue and fund disposition modified, food safety and defense task force established and NextGen energy provided.

HF1203-Poppe (DFL)**Biosciences & Emerging Technology**

Bioscience institute facilities construction materials and equipment sales tax exemption provided.

HF1204-Davnie (DFL)**Taxes**

Low-income housing sales tax exemption extended to limited partnerships in which the sole general partner is a nonprofit corporation.

HF1205-Kranz (DFL)**Housing Policy & Finance & Public Health Finance Division**

Displaced residents relocation compensation required relating to manufactured homes.

HF1206-Kelliher (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Universal Newborn and Infant Hearing Screening Act adopted.

HF1207-McNamara (R)**Finance**

Red Wing juvenile corrections facility vocational education building funding provided.

HF1208-Mahoney (DFL)
Finance
State Building Code modified, and construction code and licensing provisions modified and recodified.

HF1209-Mullery (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Homeowners transactions regulated when homes are in foreclosure.

Thursday, February 22

HF1210-Dean (R)
Finance
Stillwater; Boomsite rest area restoration, reopening and maintenance required, and site transfer prohibited.

HF1211-Otremba (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Deer hunting; smokeless gunpowder prohibition during muzzle-loader season repealed.

HF1212-Mullery (DFL)
Taxes
Gift tax imposed and coordinated with the estate tax.

HF1213-Clark (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Drug free and prostitution free zones expanded and pilot project funding provided for Minneapolis and St. Paul.

HF1214-Knuth (DFL)
Finance
Rural wind development assistance program funding provided.

HF1215-Juhnke (DFL)
Taxes
Willmar wastewater treatment facility construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1216-Simon (DFL)
Finance
Southwest transitway corridor draft environmental impact statement and preliminary engineering funding provided.

HF1217-Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Road and bridge maintenance construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1218-Lesch (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Trial by jury waiver court and prosecutor approval required.

HF1219-Juhnke (DFL)
Transportation Finance Division
Milk truck weight exemption sunset date repealed.

HF1220-Hilstrom (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Child advocacy center grants provided.

HF1221-Kalin (DFL)
Finance
Energy savings activities required under the conservation investment program.

HF1222-Marquart (DFL)
Taxes
Proposed property taxes and public truth in taxation hearings notices dates advanced.

HF1223-Hilty (DFL)
Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections
Elections; postsecondary institutions required to submit student residential housing lists, eligible proof of residence forms of identification expanded, and employee-list submission by residential facility operators eliminated.

HF1224-Hornstein (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
State funds use prohibited for encouraging or discouraging union organizing.

HF1225-Olin (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Limitation on actions modified for damages based on services or construction to improve real property.

HF1226-Mullery (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
Automated teller machine applicants criminal background check required for applicants other than financial institutions.

HF1227-Morgan (DFL)
Finance
Burnsville Performing Arts Center funding provided.

HF1228-Dill (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Lake trout season modified within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

HF1229-Demmer (R)
Taxes
Installation charges excluded from the sales tax.

HF1230-Nelson (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Emergency 911 communication fees requirements modified.

HF1231-Marquart (DFL)
Finance
Special motor vehicle disabled American veteran license plates authorized.

HF1232-Lesch (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Predatory offender law registration required for persons convicted of specified crimes of violence.

HF1233-Benson (DFL)
Finance
Foodshelf programs funding provided.

HF1234-Anderson, S. (R)
Taxes
Supplemental refund provided under the additional property tax refund program.

HF1235-Berns (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
Zebra mussel control pilot program established.

HF1236-Berns (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
Zebra mussel control pilot program established.

HF1237-Lesch (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Criminal records expungement provisions modified.

HF1238-Lesch (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Controlled Substance Reform Act of 2007 adopted authorizing deferral of judgment for certain drug offenses and making affirmative defenses available for driving while impaired offenses.

HF1239-Simon (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Sexual abuse against a minor; civil actions limitation period modified.

HF1240-Marquart (DFL)
Taxes
Historic structure rehabilitation income tax credit provided.

HF1241-Thao (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Archery hunting provisions modified by permitting use of bow drawn, held or released by mechanical device.

HF1242-Mullery (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Board of Public Defense required to allocate and distribute funds based on weighted caseload.

HF1243-Bunn (DFL)
Finance
Big Marine Park Reserve improvements funding provided.

HF1244-Masin (DFL)
Finance
Motor vehicle sales tax proceeds apportionment provided.

HF1245-Eken (DFL)
Taxes
Volunteer ambulance personnel longevity awards income tax subtraction provided.

HF1246-Bigham (DFL)
Finance
Kids Voting Minnesota funding provided.

HF1247-Simpson (R)
Taxes
Resort expenditures sales tax refund provided.

HF1248-Tillberry (DFL)
Taxes
Commuter rail system construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1249-Atkins (DFL)
Taxes
Senior independent living personal technology income tax credit provided.

HF1250-Bunn (DFL)
Taxes
Telecommuting equipment income tax credit provided.

HF1251-Atkins (DFL)
Public Safety & Civil Justice
Insurance actions; direct actions authorized and direct liability imposed on insurers in certain actions and actions regulated.

HF1252-Murphy, M. (DFL)
Finance
Deaf, hard-of-hearing and deaf-blind student transition services funding provided.

HF1253-Wollschlaeger (DFL)
Finance
Augsburg College; Step UP program funding provided to provide educational opportunities to chemically dependent students.

HF1254-Hosch (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Interim zoning ordinance notice and public hearings required.

HF1255-Nelson (DFL)
Commerce & Labor
Workers' compensation; independent contractor status determination powers clarified and documents review required.

HF1256-Masin (DFL)
Biosciences & Emerging Technology
Bioscience business development and commercialization grants provided and report required.

HF1257-Urdahl (R)**Finance**

Greater Minnesota business development public infrastructure grant program funding provided.

HF1258-Lenczewski (DFL)**Taxes**

Federal tax conformity provided for individual income, corporate franchise, estate taxes, and property tax refunds; rates modified; technical corrections provided; and onetime subtraction provided for pollution control amortization.

HF1259-Kalin (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Absent voters procedures and requirements modified, emergency situations provided and study required.

HF1260-Severson (R)**Taxes**

Taxable market value increase prohibited for homesteads owned by persons at least 65 years of age and within certain income limits.

HF1261-Severson (R)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Board of Judicial Standards composition, powers and court rule provisions modified.

HF1262-Mahoney (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Joint physical custody presumption created, parenting plans required in certain cases and custody designations modified for parenting plans that use alternative terminology.

HF1263-Abeler (R)**Finance**

Anoka County forensic crime lab funding provided.

HF1264-Eastlund (R)**Taxes**

Early childhood education access grants contribution and early childhood educational expenses income tax credit authorized.

HF1265-Mullery (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Absentee ballot treatment provided following a vacancy in nomination because of death or catastrophic illness.

HF1266-Mullery (DFL)**Taxes**

Corporate franchise taxation throwback sales rule provided.

HF1267-Morgan (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

State employee technical and house-keeping changes provided.

HF1268-Fritz (DFL)**Finance**

Paradise Center for the Arts funding provided.

HF1269-Davnie (DFL)**Finance**

Target Center city bonds principal repayment grant provided.

HF1270-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Sex offender assessments expanded to include additional crimes.

HF1271-Mullery (DFL)**Taxes**

Gift taxation provided for gifts made within three years of death.

HF1272-Slawik (DFL)**Finance**

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

HF1273-Kranz (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Sexual assault counselor testimonial confidentiality provided, "mistake of age" defense eliminated for certain criminal sexual assault offenders, and penalties enhanced for nonconsensual sexual contact committed by massage professionals.

HF1274-Hilstrom (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Integrated search service inquiries authorized, drivers' license photographs use restricted relating to criminal justice, Public Safety Department enhanced officer safety provisions authorized and CriMNet Task Force membership clarified.

HF1275-Lesch (DFL)**Finance**

St. Paul neighborhood circulators grant provided.

HF1276-Murphy, E. (DFL)**Finance**

St. Paul; professional development funding provided to parks and library staff who interact with children and families.

HF1277-Mariani (DFL)**Finance**

St. Paul; grant provided to notify citizens of youth services available in the community.

HF1278-Olin (DFL)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Homestead property provided relating to real property.

HF1279-Hornstein (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Metropolitan Transit police law enforcement agency jurisdiction clarified and transit police included in distribution of forfeited items.

HF1280-Hortman (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources**

Diesel truck idling reduction device grants provided.

HF1281-Erickson (R)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Medical service personnel exempted from prohibition on use of headphones while operating ambulance.

HF1282-Holberg (R)**Public Safety & Civil Justice**

Transportation Department data classified.

HF1283-Nelson (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

Misrepresentation of employees as independent contractors prohibited and review of certifications of independent contractor status required.

HF1284-Mahoney (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

State grants management provided by the commissioner of finance.

HF1285-Walker (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Indian child placement provisions modified.

HF1286-Walker (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Child maltreatment reporting provisions modified relating to American Indian children.

HF1287-Davnie (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Colorectal screening tests medical insurance coverage required.

HF1288-Murphy, E. (DFL)**Finance**

Day training and habilitation transportation rates modified.

HF1289-Heidgerken (R)**Finance**

Nursing home per diem reimbursements determination procedures modified.

HF1290-Slawik (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Child safety system and child safety fund established and reports required.

HF1291-Erickson (R)**Health & Human Services**

Specialized services contracts with nursing facilities authorized, short-stay resident reimbursement modified, facility operating payment rates increased, health impact fee portion dedicated and new case mix indices implemented.

HF1292-Slawik (DFL)**Finance**

Child care finance provisions modified, and money appropriated.

HF1293-Mullery (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

MinnesotaCare eligibility requirements modified for persons with continuation coverage.

HF1294-Berns (R)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Minnesota Council on Disability sunset eliminated.

HF1295-Thissen (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Chemically dependent person definition expanded to include tetrahydrocannabinol and alcohol use relating to pregnancy.

HF1296-Laine (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Doula services health insurance coverage required, medical assistance coverage provided and doula presence upon request added to the patient bill of rights.

HF1297-Huntley (DFL)**Finance**

Intermediate care facilities for persons with developmental disabilities, community service providers and nursing facilities rate increase provided.

HF1298-Thissen (DFL)**Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections**

Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund covered salary defined to include certain supplemental plan contributions.

HF1299-Atkins (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

Person required to be present in close attendance when dispensing fuel into a motor vehicle.

HF1300-Juhnke (DFL)**Commerce & Labor**

Fuel terminals weekly inventory reports required.

HF1301-Moe (DFL)**Housing Policy & Finance & Public Health Finance Division**

Residents right of first refusal established when a manufactured home park is being sold.

HF1302-Kalin (DFL) Public Safety & Civil Justice Driver photographic record use provisions modified relating to law enforcement.	HF1312-Jaros (DFL) Taxes Affordable housing contributions income tax credit provided.	HF1321-Bunn (DFL) E-12 Education World languages provided as a required academic standard.	HF1329-Thissen (DFL) Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections Public Employee Retirement Association police and fire plan; Anoka County field investigator exempted from reemployed annuitant provisions.
HF1303-Welti (DFL) Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections Open meeting law; meetings by telephones or other electronic means authorized under certain conditions.	HF1313-Thissen (DFL) Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections Minneapolis Retirement Fund investment of assets with the State Board of Investment authorized and certain liquidity requirements modified.	HF1322-Berns (R) E-12 Education World language four-credit requirement established.	HF1330-Mullery (DFL) Commerce & Labor Airports; sale or other transfer of real property disclosure requirements repealed.
HF1304-Tingelstad (R) Finance Human trafficking; legal advocacy trafficking victims grant provided.	HF1314-Atkins (DFL) Commerce & Labor Truth in Music Advertising Act adopted regulating the advertising of live musical performances.	HF1323-Urdahl (R) Finance Special education program funding increased.	HF1331-Murphy, M. (DFL) Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections Retirement coverage provisions modified and technical changes provided.
HF1305-Holberg (R) Public Safety & Civil Justice State and local law enforcement agencies required to provide data through integrated search service.	HF1315-Hamilton (R) Finance Minnesota Commission on New Americans established and appointments provided.	HF1324-Heidgerken (R) Finance Levy authority authorized for unfunded severance and retirement costs faced by school districts that have participated in the cooperative secondary facilities program.	HF1332-Clark (DFL) Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections State Board of Investment divestment from certain investments relating to Sudan required.
HF1306-Holberg (R) Public Safety & Civil Justice Business screening agencies regulated.	HF1316-Hortman (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Certain mercury-containing products sales prohibited; sales, use and disposal requirements modified; consumer information required; lamp recycling requirements modified; and mercury reduction at crematoriums provided.	HF1325-Peterson, S. (DFL) E-12 Education High five kindergarten program authorized.	HF1333-Dill (DFL) Taxes Emergency response vehicles and repair parts tax exemptions provided.
HF1307-Hilstrom (DFL) Finance Peace officer hirings and peace officer overtime funding provided to local governments.	HF1317-Hornstein (DFL) E-12 Education Elementary and secondary class sizes measuring and reporting provided.	HF1326-Hilstrom (DFL) Public Safety & Civil Justice Local Community Rail Security Act of 2007 adopted providing for protection of railroad property from terrorism and other criminal activities.	HF1334-Lesch (DFL) Commerce & Labor Health Families, Healthy Workplaces Act adopted establishing minimum standards of sick leave.
HF1308-Tingelstad (R) Finance Anoka County regional forensic crime laboratory funding provided.	HF1318-McFarlane (R) Finance Special education funding increased and two-year lag in base funding increased.	HF1327-Marquart (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Lake improvement districts requirements modified.	HF1335-Poppe (DFL) Commerce & Labor Consistent use of State Building Code's definition of a "story above grade" required.
HF1309-Hilstrom (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Political subdivision defined relating to state auditor.	HF1319-Tillberry (DFL) E-12 Education Regional center for the visual arts pilot program established.	HF1328-Peterson, S. (DFL) Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology & Elections St. Paul Teachers Retirement Fund Association purchase of service credit for uncredited prior teaching service in an early childhood family education position authorized.	HF1336-Mahoney (DFL) Commerce & Labor Council of High Pressure Piping Systems established and fees required.
HF1310-Atkins (DFL) Taxes Lawful gambling tax rates temporary reduction provided.	HF1320-Severson (R) Finance Statutory operating debt fund transfers for school districts authorized.	HF1337-Davnie (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Minneapolis street and street lighting construction funding authorized.	

Frequently called numbers

(Area code 651)

House Public Information Services

175 State Office Building296-2146

House Committee Hotline296-9283

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol296-2314

House Index

211 Capitol296-6646

Senate Information

231 Capitol296-0504

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol296-2344

Voice mail/order bills296-2343

Senate Index

110 Capitol296-2887

Senate Committee Hotline296-8088

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES
175 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
100 REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BLVD.
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1298

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE: MARGARET ANDERSON KELLIHER

MAJORITY LEADER: ANTHONY "TONY" SERTICH

MINORITY LEADER: MARTY SEIFERT

MINNESOTA INDEX

Paying for post-secondary schooling

Number of public and private post-secondary institutions in the state	178
Estimated number of students at Minnesota colleges and universities	
in fall 2006.....	326,244
Percent increase over 2005.....	1.8
Percent increase over 2002.....	6.6
Number of undergraduates who received a state grant in 2005-06 school year	71,100
Total amount distributed, in millions.....	\$124
Average state grant in fiscal year 2005, as approximate.....	\$1,700
Approximate percent of 2005-06 awards that went to students whose	
annual family income was \$30,000 or less.....	61.9
Appropriation for state grants in governor's proposed budget for	
fiscal years 2008-09, in millions.....	\$304
Students combining to receive \$18.1 million in state work-study dollars	
in 2005-06 school year.....	10,700
Account holders, as of July 2006, in the Minnesota College Savings Plan, a	
state-sponsored, plan that helps families save for college	47,805
Assets in the plan, in millions.....	\$442
Percent increase in undergraduate tuition and fees at University of Minnesota-	
Twin Cities between 1997 and 2007, in current dollars	112
Percent increase at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities four-year	
state universities	112
Percent increase at MnSCU two-year community and technical colleges.....	100
Percent increase at private four-year schools.....	73
Percent increase in student borrowing between 2003 and 2005	22
Millions borrowed by Minnesota undergraduates in 2005	\$949
Percent increase in amount borrowed by undergraduates from private lenders	
from 2003 to 2005	83
Millions in Federal Pell Grants provided to Minnesota undergraduates in 2005.....	\$179
Percent increase from 2003.....	8
Percent increase in financial aid for MnSCU students from 2003 to 2006.....	26
Percent increase in student loans.....	39
Percent increase in scholarships and grants.....	7
Percent increase for average state grant to MnSCU students from 2003 to 2006.....	7
Average amount borrowed in 2006 by a MnSCU student.....	\$5,117
Percent increase from 2003.....	15

— M. COOK

Sources: [Office of Higher Education](#), including [Highlights of Financial Aid Awarded 2005 and Preliminary Post-Secondary Enrollment Census for Fall 2006](#); [Minnesota State Colleges and Universities](#), including [Students and Graduate Borrowing and Financial Aid Trends, Feb. 2007](#); [Gov. Tim Pawlenty's 2008-09 biennial budget proposal](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For general information, call House Public Information Services at (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550.

To have a copy of Session Weekly mailed to you, subscribe online at: www.house.mn/hinfo/subscribesw.asp or call: (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550.

If you enjoy Session Weekly, please consider helping to defray production and mailing costs with a biennial voluntary subscription of \$20 or more.

Make your check payable to Minnesota House of Representatives, and mail it to: House Public Information Services: 175 State Office Building 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

Session Weekly online is available at: www.house.mn.

Subscribe to Session Daily e-mail alerts at: www.house.mn/list/join.asp?listname=sessiondaily.

To obtain a copy of a bill, call the Chief Clerk's Office at (651) 296-2314.

To find out about bill introductions or the status of a specific bill, call the House Index Office at (651) 296-6646.

The House of Representatives can be found on the Web at: www.house.mn.

People who are deaf and hard of hearing may ask questions or leave messages by calling the Minnesota Relay service at 711 or (800) 627-3529 (TTY).

Check your local listings to watch television coverage of House committees, floor sessions and select press conferences.