

SESSION WEEKLY



OMNIBUS BILLS BEGIN TO ARRIVE
RESUSCITATING THE VOUCHER DEBATE
FOUR FAIRS FOR FAR NORTH
DEFUNDING FUNDED CAPITAL PROJECTS

HF1050 - HF1197

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION
MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES • PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES
VOLUME 23, NUMBER 11 • MARCH 18, 2011

Flashback to 1991, 2001, 2006

Wet and wild, but only with a life vest

As you dust off your Jet Ski to get ready for a summer's day on the lake, you might have to brush up on a new law, too.

The House Environment and Natural Resources Committee approved HF633 proposed by Rep. Anthony Kinkel (DFL-Park Rapids), which would regulate personal watercraft.

Under the bill, you'll have to be at least 16 years old to operate a personal watercraft by yourself and be required to wear a life jacket and watch when and where you use your "wet bike."

According to the Department of Natural Resources 6,145 personal watercraft were registered in the state in 1990.

— Session Weekly March 15, 1991

Another decrease to state income taxes

For the third consecutive year, Minnesotans would see a decrease in their state income taxes, under three bills heard by the House Taxes Committee.

HF1, sponsored by Rep. Carl Jacobson (R-Vadnais Heights), and HF554 sponsored by Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) would reduce the state's lowest and highest tax bracket rates by 0.50 percent. The middle rate would be lowered by 0.75 percent. HF74, sponsored by Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) would reduce all three rates by 0.50 percent.

— Session Weekly March 16, 2001

Funding for the arts and outdoors

A bill, HF3269, sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) seeks a constitutional amendment to raise Minnesota's sales and use tax by 0.25 percent to raise approximately \$191 million a year over 25 years for arts and outdoors projects.

In the House Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, Ozment successfully amended the bill to remove the arts and cultural items.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) cautioned against removing the arts and humanities items "mainly because I would want this to pass as a constitutional amendment and that guarantees that it passes."

— Session Weekly March 17, 2006

Contents

FIRST READING: Limited scholarships for low-income students • 3-4

HIGHLIGHTS: Abortion, budget targets and omnibus bills begin to surface • 5-18

BILL INTRODUCTIONS: HF1050–HF1197 • 19-22

RESOURCES: Roster of the Minnesota House of Representatives • 23

MINNESOTA INDEX: Minnesota Roads and Traffic Collisions • 24

SESSION WEEKLY

Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Services. Produced during session, it covers the previous week's news from the House. No fee.

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 St. Paul, Minn., and additional offices. 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, 50% post-consumer content.

On the cover: Angelique McDonald, a page for the House Property and Local Tax Division, kneels to find a bill for a lobbyist outside the division hearing March 11.

— Photo by Tom Olmscheid

A voucher by any other name

Bill would create limited scholarships for low-income students

By KRIS BERGGREN

A group of fresh-faced, uniform-clad students came to the testifying table one by one before the House Education Finance Committee March 14 to tell members about their education at Cristo Rey High School, a Catholic school in Minneapolis.

Contrasting the Jesuit-run institution with previous public schools they'd attended, the students of various racial backgrounds said it offers personal attention, has boosted their college aspirations and provided the structure and support they need to grow personally and academically.

"It's been great," summed up Mohamed Ali, a senior who has participated in the YMCA Youth in Government program, plans to attend college and is grateful for the job experience with local employers that's part of the curriculum.

The students spoke in support of HF273, which its sponsor, Rep. Kelby Woodard (R-Belle Plaine), calls a "limited scholarship program for low-income families." Payments up to the amount of the average general education per pupil revenue, currently \$5,124, would be made to a student's parent or guardian and sent to a nonpublic school, where the parent would endorse the check for the school's use. School participation would be voluntary.



"These are the kids who are part of the achievement gap. We need to educate, not perpetuate."

— Rep. Kelby Woodard
R-Belle Plaine

The committee laid the bill over for possible inclusion in an omnibus bill. Sen. Sean Nienow (R-Cambridge) sponsors a companion, SF388, which was laid over March 17 by the Senate Education Committee.

The bill resuscitates a debate that highlights fundamental party-line differences over educational philosophy and strategy. Are

vouchers an effective way to outsource a job the state hasn't been able to do, namely, close the achievement gap? Or are they a serious infringement on the public trust to fund a universal education system available to all?

Woodard sees targeted scholarships as a free-market tool expanding parents' school choices that could improve educational outcomes for at-risk students. The program would take effect only in cities of the first class: Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth and Rochester. Those eligible would be families earning a maximum of 175 percent of the federal



"The challenge in front of us is to make educational achievement less predictable. We can predict by ZIP code, family income and skin color how a student will do."

— Rep. Jim Davnie
DFL-Mpls

poverty level with a child who has spent at least one year in a school ranked as low-performing according to federal guidelines for at least three years.

"These are the kids who are part of the achievement gap," Woodard said. "We need to educate, not perpetuate."

DFL lawmakers appreciate Woodard's goal of tackling educational inequities, but say vouchers are unconstitutional and unnecessary given Minnesota's existing school choice options such as open enrollment, charter schools and magnet schools.

"The challenge in front of us is to make educational achievement less predictable. We can predict by ZIP code, family income and skin color how a student will do," said Rep. Jim Davnie (DFL-Mpls).

Instead of opening an escape hatch for a few students by offering vouchers, Davnie believes the state should invest in targeted services, such as extending school hours or offering summer school for all students who need them. For example, a 2010 report by the Office of the Legislative Auditor found K-8 students who attended extended-time programs at alternative learning centers showed higher-than-expected growth on two standardized assessments compared with

other students and national norms.

Michelle Walker, St. Paul Public Schools chief accountability officer, said the district is beginning to close the achievement gap and turn around

failing schools by making such investments, paring programs and closing failing schools.

"Despite our progress, we have a long way to go," she said. "We are not shy at facing our failures and confronting them head on." She urged members to stay the course by investing in what is beginning to show positive results, not create more options.

Choices abound

Minnesota has been ahead of the curve as the first state to authorize charter schools and was an early adopter of open enrollment, magnet schools and postsecondary enrollment options.

There are also existing federally funded pathways authorized to help students in struggling schools. Under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act

First Reading continued on page 4

First Reading continued from page 3

— or No Child Left Behind — a student attending a school not making federal proficiency or growth targets may transfer to another school in the same district or receive supplementary education services, such as tutoring, either at a district school or a private facility, according to John Moorse, director of consolidated federal programs with the Education Department. Transportation to a same-district school is funded, but not to a charter or non-district school.

In Minneapolis, about 22,500 students were eligible to change schools under that aegis last year, said Jim Grathwol, the district's lobbyist, but only 23 families inquired about it and just 11 students did so.

Justice for all

Both sides see their position as one of justice. Woodard believes the bill would give low income parents more equal access to nonpublic education as families with means. He said it's not unlike an early childhood scholarship

program in St. Paul allowing low-income families to choose a high-quality preschool they would not otherwise be able to afford or state grant aid for higher education, which students may use at any higher education institution.

Davnie said a key difference is that the state doesn't have a constitutional responsibility to provide universal early childhood education or higher education as it does for the K-12 system. Furthermore, taxpayer dollars should not fund schools that discriminate in any way based on religious belief, or that fail to comply with state and federal statutes such as open meeting laws, the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requiring schools to provide free and equal education access to students with special needs.

"HF273 essentially abandons the state's constitutional obligation to provide a uniform, thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state," said Teresa Nelson, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota.

A 2002 United States Supreme Court ruling said Ohio's voucher program is constitutional because parents may choose sectarian schools or not. Florida's and Arizona's supreme courts blocked voucher programs in 2006 and 2009, respectively.

Among other DFL members offering amendments, Rep. Denise Dittrich (DFL-Champlin) unsuccessfully offered one that would have required a nonpublic school receiving scholarship funding to report annually on their finances, governance, staffing, demographics and academic performance measures in the same manner as a charter school.

"We have spent a lot of time, energy and money in the past 15 years in this education system of increasing the accountability and transparency of where we are investing our money. We all do this to benefit children," she said. "What rises to the top here is that we are still state representatives and our primary job is to allocate funding to different areas of the budget. We need to be very accountable to the taxpayers of this state." 🗽

GETTING READY



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Bob Johnson of Plant Management repaints one of the four Cass Gilbert-designed flag cases in the Capitol Rotunda March 14 in preparation of the History Center's April 9 Civil War flag ceremony to return four of the Civil War flags to the Capitol.

HIGHLIGHTS

MARCH 10 - 17, 2011

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select information heard in House committees and other House activities held March 10-17. Designations used in Highlight summaries: HF-House File; SF-Senate File; Ch-Chapter; and *- the bill version considered by the House or the bill language signed by the governor.

Bonding

High-speed rail could be derailed

The proposed high-speed train from the Twin Cities to Chicago and a trail providing bike access to the new Lake Vermilion State Park could be in jeopardy.

House Capital Investment Committee Chairman Larry Howes (R-Walker) sponsors HF1104 that would cancel approximately \$60.6 million for previously bonded projects, including a new Minnesota planetarium, infrastructure improvements to veterans homes, several passenger rail projects and a regional public safety training center. Approved March 15 by the committee, it now moves to the House Ways and Means Committee. It has no Senate companion.

Preliminary estimates show the bill's General Fund impact at approximately \$3.4 million in the 2012-2013 biennium.

The projects that could be defunded were bonded for in previous years, but for various reasons have not moved beyond the planning stage.

An Olmsted County Regional Public Safety Training Center, after several tries, made it into the 2008 capital investment law with its \$3.65 million request. County representatives told the committee that plans ran up against the recession, and that the county scaled the project back by \$70,000 and delayed it until 2010.

"Our commitment to the project is still there," said Paul Wilson, chairman of the Olmsted County Board. He said that local resources have been expended on the project.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul), who chaired the committee the previous four years, criticized the proposed nixing of \$26 million approved by the governor in 2009 for a Twin Cities-to-Chicago high-speed rail line federal match.

Bernie Arseneau, Department of

Transportation deputy commissioner, said former Gov. Tim Pawlenty requested the money to secure the match. He said the loss of support would also put in question the future plans for the St. Paul train depot, and a rail line from the Twin Cities to Duluth.

However, Rep. Peggy Scott (R-Andover) said that current rail projects aren't delivering as promised. "It's all my money; they are losing money. ... It doesn't seem like a viable idea." She said the population base doesn't justify a rail line between Duluth and the Twin Cities.

The \$950,000 funding approved in 2008 for the Mesabi Trail connection from Bearhead Lake State Park to the International Wolf Center in Ely and a link through the new Lake Vermilion State Park would be canceled.

Rep. David Dill (DFL-Crane Lake) said the defunding "didn't make any sense."

"We created Vermilion State Park. We paid for the land for a park that has a (state) park next to it. Now we get rid of appropriation

to link a trail through the new \$18 million state park."

Howes said the committee may consider more bond cancellations at a meeting next week.

— L. SCHUTZ

Budget

Budget targets approved

On a 17-13 vote, members of the House Ways and Means Committee signed off March 14 on budget targets that would include deep spending cuts to some areas of state government.

The House's Republican majority is proposing to spend \$34.26 billion from the state's General Fund in fiscal years 2012-2013. Compared to forecasted spending levels, that represents a proposed 12.2 percent reduction; however, it would still be a 5.5 percent increase over current biennial General Fund spending.

"We feel that these numbers are living within our means, and that we'll be able to meet the necessary needs of the state in the numbers reflected in this target," said Committee Chairwoman Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville).

DFL committee members said the proposed budget targets would lead to college tuition hikes, property tax increases and stunted job growth. They introduced a number of amendments to adopt Gov. Mark Dayton's proposed spending levels for budget areas like higher education, economic development and local government aid, but the amendments were either voted down or ruled out of order.

Here are the House's budget targets as approved by the committee, along with numbers indicating their change from forecasted 2012-2013 spending levels:

- \$14.16 billion for k-12 education (-9.4 percent);
- \$10.71 billion for health and human services (-13.2 percent);
- \$2.96 billion for tax aids and credits (-15.7 percent);
- \$2.51 billion for higher education (-14.1 percent);
- \$1.17 billion for capital investment (-4.9 percent);



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Minnesota Planetarium President Angus Vaughan tells the House Capital Investment Committee March 15 that the planetarium's funding appropriation should be removed from a bill that would cancel some previous appropriations.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

During a March 10 press conference to release budget targets, House Majority Leader Matt Dean tells the Capitol press corps that the House's budget proposal will get more votes than Gov. Mark Dayton's proposal received. His comments came at the end of a news conference with House Speaker Kurt Zellers, center, and House Ways and Means Committee Chairwoman Mary Liz Holberg.

- \$1.03 billion for public safety (-2.8 percent);
- \$726.8 million for judiciary (0 percent);
- \$443.7 million for state government (-51.4 percent);
- \$228.1 million for environment, energy and natural resources (-22.3 percent);
- \$120.2 million for transportation (-33.3 percent);
- \$81.6 million for jobs and economic development (-51.5 percent); and
- \$76.8 million for agriculture (-14 percent).

A more detailed spreadsheet is available online from the nonpartisan House Fiscal Analysis Department.

— N. BUSSE

Business & Commerce

Home sales pricing clarified

When a homeowner wants to determine a reasonable price at which to list a house for sale, a real estate agent or broker is usually asked to compare recent neighborhood sales. It's technically called a "broker price opinion" and usually considered part of the package of services included in the agent's commission.

HF323, sponsored by House Commerce and Regulatory Reform Committee Chairman Joe Hoppe (R-Chaska), clarifies that role. The committee approved the bill March 15 and sent it to the House floor.

Sen. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) sponsors a companion, SF167, which awaits action by the full Senate.

The bill also allows those preparing a broker price opinion to charge and collect a fee. However, the fee is not intended to apply to a typical home seller or buyer, said Paul Eger, vice president for governmental affairs with the Minnesota Association of Realtors.

It's intended for the increased number of third parties interested in obtaining price opinions, due to the great number of foreclosed properties on the market.

The bill also permits more than one exclusive agreement for representation for different real estate services. For example, if a property stays on the market for months, the seller may simultaneously try to lease it. Those services could be performed by different companies or individuals. The bill also clarifies that a broker price opinion is not an appraisal for mortgage purposes.

— K. BERGGREN

Bank allowed to expand

Signed
by
the
governor

An independently owned bank based in Winger may now expand its small office in Northern Township into a full-service bank branch.

Ultima Bank sought an exemption to a 40-year-old law preventing such expansion into a township.

Rep. John Persell (DFL-Bemidji) and Sen.

John Carlson (R-Bemidji) sponsor the law, signed March 17 by Gov. Mark Dayton. It takes effect upon local compliance with state statute.

The bank just outside the Bemidji city limits is in an area with an annexation plan that is still 10 years out from implementation. The bank holds a lease, so lacks the ability of a property owner to request annexation.

HF305/SF125*/CH7

— K. BERGGREN

Education

Paying for out-of-state students

The Robbinsdale School District foots the bill for the education of students from other states or countries who are in residence at Hazelden adolescent treatment center for chemical dependency, John Neumann, the district's teaching and learning specialist, told the House Education Finance Committee March 14.

St. Paul schools do the same for some children receiving medical treatment at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare or other facilities, said Mary Gilbert, the district's legislative liaison.

"We bill the (out-of-state) districts that send kids in, but they simply don't pay us," Gilbert said.

Sponsored by Rep. Sandra Peterson (DFL-New Hope), HF360 would help districts that provide education services to out-of-state students recoup the costs from the students' families or home districts.

The committee laid the bill over for possible omnibus bill inclusion. A companion, SF199, sponsored by Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope), was laid over by the Senate Education Committee for possible inclusion in an omnibus bill.

The bill would relieve school districts from providing education services, including teachers who work with individual students in residential facilities, unless a payment arrangement is made with the student's home district or parents. It does not apply to special education services.

The bill would have no effect on foreign exchange students considered Minnesota residents while they are in an exchange program and living in a host home.

— K. BERGGREN

Child care rating expanded

Minnesota Parent Aware, a child care and early childhood program quality rating system now being piloted, could become

permanent and expand statewide.

Child care providers in four areas of the state voluntarily participate in the four-star rating system, which provides consumer information to parents about the quality of some of their child care options. HF669, sponsored by Rep. Jenifer Loon (R-Eden Prairie) would authorize the Education Department to issue a request for proposals to continue the system, but doesn't specify an appropriation amount.

The House Education Finance Committee laid the bill over March 16 for possible inclusion in an omnibus bill. Sen. Geoff Michel (R-Edina) sponsors a companion, SF331, which awaits action by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

The bill would also provide scholarships to certain families earning equal to or less than 47 percent of the median state income. That's roughly \$40,000 for a family of four, according to Laurie Davis, policy director for the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation. The scholarship would be \$4,000 a year for each eligible child and could be used at a three- or four-star rated program.

Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton) said many child care providers in her district view the rating system as creating a perception there are two classes of child care facilities and don't think government resources should be spent on it.

Karen Effrem, a board member of Education Liberty Watch, said the best environment for children is in a two-parent family and that funds are better spent in K-12.

"This is not an attempt to have the program take over parenting responsibilities for young children. It is for parents who want to, or have to because of their economic circumstances, go out to work and they want a certain enriching environment for their child to be in while they have to be away," Loon said.

Rep. Denise Dittrich (DFL-Champlin) said high-quality child care programs have been shown to help increase low-income parents' earning power by 30 percent and to help parents improve their parenting skills.

— K. BERGGREN

Change in definition of school district?

Last year about \$22.8 million in interest and dividend payments from Permanent School Fund investments were distributed among Minnesota's school districts, in amounts of about \$28 per resident pupil. Before fiscal year 2010, the revenue was treated as a General Fund offset.

Sponsored by House Education Finance Committee Chairman Pat Garofalo (R-Farmington), HF783 would expand the beneficiaries to include charter schools. It would also include charter schools in the statutory definition of "school district" and change the distribution of PSF revenue to pupils served instead of resident pupils. Resident pupils are the number of students who live in a district, but not those who actually attend district schools.

The committee laid the bill over March 14 for possible omnibus bill inclusion. It has no Senate companion.

Rep. Kathy Brynaert (DFL-Mankato) asked if redefining a school district for this purpose would cause unintended consequences related to the understanding of district or charter school requirements in other statutes.

The Minnesota School Boards Association believes the proposal would be unconstitutional, according to Grace Keliher, the association's government relations director. In a 2008 opinion, Thomas Deans, the association's legal counsel, referred to the original constitutional article, which stipulates that the fund income must go to school districts "in a manner prescribed by law."

Eugene Piccolo, executive director of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, said that article indicates the Legislature prescribes the law and therefore may decide to make changes.

"We always talk about the Permanent School Fund land as that owned by all the school children of Minnesota," said Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), no matter what kind of public school they attend.

If the change were to become law, charter schools could see new revenue ranging from a few hundred dollars to about \$78,000 to a large K-12 charter school in Minneapolis. Some school districts could gain revenue because they enroll pupils from outside their districts, while others would lose income because

more resident pupils enroll elsewhere. For example, Minneapolis Public Schools could lose approximately \$321,800; Osseo Area Schools, \$61,700; and Rochester Public Schools, \$32,600.

— K. BERGGREN

Public employee insurance changes

Teachers and other public employees might have to seek approval from their employers before joining a statewide insurance pool.

Sponsored by Rep. Joe Hoppe (R-Chaska), HF371 would change the process for local government employees to join the Public Employees Insurance Program. It would also change eligibility rules for pensioners to participate in the program after retirement.

The House Government Operations

GRADING TEACHERS



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Leah Jones, a third-grade teacher at Concordia Creative Learning Academy in St. Paul, testifies March 14 before the House Education Reform Committee in support of a bill that would establish a teacher professional development structure and way to measure a teacher's performance effectiveness.

and Elections Committee approved the bill March 16 and referred it to the House Commerce and Regulatory Reform Committee.

Under current law, public employee unions can decide whether to join PEIP. The bill would require the employer's approval. In addition, a majority of all employees of a particular local unit of government would have to approve the decision.

Under the provisions, if teachers in a certain school district want to join the program, they would have to seek approval from the other district employees as well as the consent of the superintendent. Supporters say the changes are needed so that one group of employees doesn't join PEIP and leave the others behind with potentially increased health insurance costs.

"We're very concerned about the effects of the unilateral ability of any one bargaining unit to elect into PEIP, basically leaving the rest of our employees stranded within our existing health plans at higher rates," said Keith Carlson, executive director of the Minnesota Inter-County Association.

Opponents argue the measure is biased against teachers and other public workers, and could lock them into costly health plans. Jim Granger, a lobbyist for Education Minnesota, said school boards and administrators have a vested interest in teachers getting their insurance through service cooperatives, which often cost more and are mostly run by school board members.

Lee Stephenson, a teacher in Moose Lake, said the bill would give superintendents veto power over teachers' ability to join PEIP. He said doing so would prevent service cooperatives from having to compete with PEIP's lower insurance plan rates, as happened in his district.

"The service co-op, when they knew that we were seeking a bid from PEIP, they brought forth their first-ever decreases in rates," he said.

Sen. Gary Dahms (R-Redwood Falls) sponsors the companion, SF247, which awaits action by the Senate State Government Innovation and Veterans Committee.

— N. BUSSE

Teacher tenure revamp proposed

A proposal heard in the House Education Finance Committee could establish a statewide teacher evaluation and appraisal process and radically change teacher tenure.

HF945, sponsored by Rep. Branden Petersen (R-Andover), was laid over March 16 for possible inclusion in an omnibus bill.

Sen. Gen Olson (R-Minnetrista) sponsors a companion, SF636, which was laid over by the Senate Education Committee.

"This bill is all about effective performance management and the bottom line is effective teachers to improve student academic achievement and growth," Petersen said. It moves from a "last in, first out" concept to one based on merit.

Some provisions align with existing Q-Comp programs or other locally based evaluation methods but prescribe more detailed requirements. Beginning in 2012-2013, all teachers would be rated on a five-part effectiveness scale and ranked on a four-tier status designation as standard, advanced, distinguished or exemplary. It also would make student test scores count for 50 percent of an appraisal. Districts would report annual teacher ratings.

The system would apply to district and charter school teachers and could be used to terminate teachers rated ineffective. During the first 60 days of a probationary teacher's first year of employment, a school board could terminate a teacher at will. A continuing contract would be for a renewable five-year period based the teacher's appraisal and other criteria including a portfolio.

Beginning in 2014, the basic revenue formula allowance would increase \$50 per pupil, to \$5,174, to offset costs, including proposed bonuses of 10 percent of a teacher's salary for teachers rated distinguished and 20 percent for those rated exemplary.

"You have broad goals that I agree with but I don't think the bill before us is justified on the basis on any evidence I've seen in terms of the detail of the evaluation or the framework," said Rep. Kathy Brynaert (DFL-Mankato). She said current student assessments are not designed to link to individual teachers, and the employment consequences would be "out of line."

— K. BERGGREN

Employment

Help for hiring minorities

The recession has been especially difficult for the state's minority communities. Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) is hoping to fund a new program to help reduce their disproportionately high unemployment rate.

He sponsors HF645 that would direct the Department of Employment and Economic Development to work with the state's minority councils on a plan to assist with job training,

licensing and placement of individuals from minority communities in appropriate jobs.

The House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee laid the bill over March 15 for possible inclusion in its omnibus finance bill. There is no Senate companion.

Mullery said the idea for the bill came from three of the state's four minority councils: the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, the Council on Black Minnesotans and the Chicano Latino Affairs Council.

"The purpose is to get people trained and into jobs," he said.

To fund the program, the bill would appropriate money from the state's Workforce Development Fund, which derives from a special payroll tax. Mullery said no amount has been settled on yet for the appropriation, but Hector Garcia, executive director of the Chicano Latino Affairs Council, said they are hoping for \$1 million.

Rep. Bev Scalze (DFL-Little Canada) questioned whether the Workforce Development Fund would be an appropriate source of funding. She said it might be better financed through the General Fund.

"It's just a theoretical, philosophic discussion that we should have," Scalze said.

Emma Corrie, workforce and business development project manager for the Department of Transportation said MnDOT has been making efforts to hire from minority communities, but needs help recruiting qualified workers.

"We can't do all the training and development in-house. We need to partner with credible organizations that have deep roots in the community that can bring the right candidates to us," she said.

— N. BUSSE

Unemployment benefits extended

Signed
by
the
governor

Some out-of-work Minnesotans may now receive a 13-week extension of their unemployment insurance benefits, thanks to a new law.

Sponsored by Rep. Rich Murray (R-Albert Lea) and Sen. John Pederson (R-St. Cloud), the new law gives Minnesotans access to a federal extension of unemployment insurance benefits recently passed by Congress and signed by President Obama. Qualifying Minnesotans will now be eligible for a maximum of 86 weeks of benefits, under the change.

Signed March 9 by Gov. Mark Dayton, the extension is effective retroactively from Dec. 19, 2010.

The extension is federally funded, and will not cost the state's unemployment insurance trust fund, which is \$600 million in deficit. Murray said the law is expected to funnel approximately \$160 million of federal funds into the state's economy.

The law also allows individuals who are laid off from their parents' businesses to receive normal unemployment insurance benefits. Effective retroactively from July 1, 2010, this law repeals a previous one that restricted such individuals to no more than five weeks' worth of benefits.

HF103*/SF114/CH6

— N. BUSSE

Workforce training tax credits

Tax credits could be provided for employees looking to better their skills.

Sponsored by Rep. Kim Norton (DFL-Rochester), HF40 would create a Lifelong Learning Account program within the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

It would create a 50 percent refundable tax credit for individual and business contributions to accounts used for worker education and training expenses. The maximum credit would be \$1,000 for individuals and \$500 for businesses.

Like 401(k) retirement accounts, employees would be permitted to contribute to the account, and employers would match their contributions up to an annual cap. A 25 percent penalty would be imposed if the money was withdrawn for a purpose other than education.

Approved March 10 by the House Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee, the bill was sent to the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee. The Senate companion, SF843, sponsored by Sen. David Senjem (R-Rochester), awaits action in the Senate Jobs and Economic Growth Committee.

"Given the economy and what's happened during this recession, had these accounts been in place for employees and employers over the years, during this recession we would have had an easier time, I think, getting some of those unemployed folks back into school because they would have had these accounts to tap into," Norton said.

Norton said higher education institutions would benefit because money would be coming into the colleges; however, the tax credit would be a cost to the state. No fiscal note was provided.

"We always see educating our young people

as a public good, but we often talk about educating adults as a private good. I would say I'm not certain that's true," Norton said.

— M. COOK

Env. & Natural Resources

Fee changes for lakeshore owners

Residents around Bass Lake in Plymouth are concerned about proposed changes to the way fees are assessed to lakeshore property owners when the Department of Natural Resources inspects the lake.

The 100-member Bass Lake Improvement Association has been paying a group rate of \$750 twice a year for the DNR lake management permit, but pressure from the Legislature to recoup the entire cost of the inspections would eliminate the group rate and increase individual fees from \$35 to \$90 per household.

Rep. Sarah Anderson (R-Plymouth) sponsors HF972, which would keep the group rate in effect until the Legislature approves otherwise. She said the DNR would spend much more time and incur many more costs associated with inspecting each household's lake management plan. The association currently pays \$20,000 annually for professional services to remove weeds and aquatic invasive species through chemical application.

In addition, removing the group rate may

result in individuals inappropriately applying too many or too few chemicals to manage their lakeshore.

Rep. Rick Hansen (DFL-South St. Paul) suggested adding a penalty and enforcement portion to the bill, but Anderson said she prefers giving the group rate as an incentive for using the correct management practice. She said the chemicals used are pre-approved by the DNR, and she suggested the agency provide lake associations with a list of approved applicators.

Hansen said legislators could make the active ingredient in the pesticide a regulated product, which would then require the person applying the chemicals to be a certified pesticide applicator.

Association President Jim Prom said residents eat the fish caught from the lake and would be concerned whether too many chemicals were being introduced by individual property applications.

The bill was laid over March 14 for possible inclusion in the House Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee. It has no Senate companion.

— S. HEGARTY

Critics take aim at omnibus bill

Provisions in the environment committee's omnibus bill were unveiled over two days of hearings, with more to come before the bill is readied for the House floor.

TECH GRANTS



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Rick King, chief technology officer at Thomson Reuters, left, and Rep. Tim Mahoney, right, listen as Robert Malecki, president, CEO and founder of Xollai, testifies March 10 before the House Taxes Committee for the bill which would establish a Minnesota science and technology program to provide grants to software publishers, medical equipment manufacturers, wireless carriers and many others to be administered by the Minnesota Science and Technology Authority.

Sponsored by Committee Chairman Denny McNamara (R-Hastings), HF1010 contains controversial Environmental Trust Fund projects. No action was taken on the bill, which has no Senate companion.

McNamara successfully deleted several projects that had been recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources; he added projects that he said were higher legislative priorities, such as a \$1 million two-year study of how wild rice may be affected by sulfate levels in air, water and soil. The Pollution Control Agency will establish new rules governing maximum sulfate levels in wild rice waters, but until the new rules are adopted, HF1010 would change the current 10 milligrams per liter maximum to 250 milligrams, which is the same standard as drinking water.

"I don't think those who propose this understand" the significance of wild rice to the Native American culture, said Rep. John Persell (DFL-Bemidji). He said wild rice probably would not survive such levels, which would be equivalent to "stomping on a Bible" to the 60,000 Native American people who consider it a sacred gift.

Also, a provision approved March 16 that

would have allowed using LCCMR money to supplant for General Funds was not included in the amended bill approved by the committee March 17. McNamara said he mistakenly thought the language was a recent addition to the law, when in fact it has been in statute since 1988. The issue of not supplanting the General Fund with constitutionally dedicated money is also linked to the Legacy and Outdoor Heritage funds. Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) said one of the four Legacy funds, the Clean Water fund, appears to be "backfilling" rather than accelerating efforts to improve impaired waters.

— S. HEGARTY

Health & Human Services

Donation for anatomical gifts

When applying for a driver's license or state identification card, an applicant is already asked if they want to be an organ donor. They may also be asked to contribute.

Rep. Sarah Anderson (R-Plymouth) sponsors HF808 that would establish a \$2 donation option "for the purposes of public information and education on anatomical gifts."

The money would be used as grants to federally certified organ procurement organizations and nonprofit organizations that advocate for organ and tissue donation. Funds would also cover all Department of Public Safety expenses to implement the program.

Approved March 16 by the House Transportation Policy and Finance Committee, the bill was sent to the House Ways and Means Committee. Rep. Michael Beard (R-Shakopee), the committee chairman, said the bill would also be considered for inclusion in the committee's omnibus bill. A companion, SF892, sponsored by Sen. David Senjem (R-Rochester), awaits action by the Senate Transportation Committee.

Susan Gunderson, CEO of LifeSource, a nonprofit organization that coordinates organ and tissue donation in the Upper Midwest, said more than half of Minnesotans have registered their intent to donate on their driver's license or ID card. The national rate is 40 percent.

"Organ and tissue donation is a gift that saves and heals thousands each year, but it's a gift that relies on the generosity

of others. Transplantation is not possible without one person selflessly giving to another," Gunderson said. "We believe that passage of this will provide citizens with the opportunity to make small individual gifts that when pulled together as a whole will be a great resource that will help support the goal of saving lives."

Rep. Mike Nelson (DFL-Brooklyn Park) asked why not have the checkoff on the state's income tax form so more people could potentially contribute annually.

Organ donation advocacy is already on the driver's license, Anderson said. "We just felt it was a logical place to put this rather than starting something brand new. We already have the mechanism in place to achieve this in a relatively easy fashion."

— M. COOK

Human cloning for research

A 2008 law bans state funding for human cloning. Rep. Bob Dettmer (R-Forest Lake) wants to go one step further.

Known by its sponsors as the "Human Cloning Prohibition Act," HF998 would make it illegal for any person or private or public entity to knowingly perform or attempt to perform human cloning.

Approved March 15 by the House Judiciary Policy and Finance Committee and referred to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee, the bill would also make it illegal to ship or receive an embryo or any product derived from an embryo produced by human cloning. Its companion, SF695, sponsored by Senate President Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville), awaits action by the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee.

Although Dettmer said the bill addresses an issue that has bipartisan support, some DFL members are concerned the bill's intended definition of "human cloning" would hinder important research already being done in the state.

"(HF998) makes it very clear in plain language that we do not produce copies of humans by cloning," Dettmer said, "And makes it doubly clear that we won't be producing human clones for the purpose of research and destruction."

Dettmer said six other states and 12 other countries, including Canada, Germany and France, have similar laws.

Representatives for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life testified in support of the legislation and fielded questions from committee members about the impact the



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Susan Thornton, director of the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, testifies before the House Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee March 16 during discussion of a bill that would appropriate Environment Trust Fund money. Rep. Larry Howes, left, sponsors the bill.

bill would have on embryonic stem cell research conducted at public and private research institutions.

Rep. Sheldon Johnson (DFL-St. Paul) referred to an opposition letter from the American Society of Reproductive Medicine that cited concern over the bill's inclusion of the process known as somatic cell nuclear transfer into the definition of human cloning.

MCCL Legislative Associate Jordan Bauer said that the process is the scientific term used for human cloning.

— H. LONG

State funding for abortion debated

Supporters of legislation to end state funding for abortion believe taxpayers shouldn't have to foot the bill for an "abhorrent" act. Those who oppose it argue that HF201, not only takes choice away from Minnesota's poorest residents but comes in conflict with the state constitution.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Peggy Scott (R-Andover) presented the bill to the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee March 15. The committee voted 13-4 to approve the bill and refer it to the House Judiciary Policy and Finance Committee. Its companion, SF103, sponsored by Sen. Dave Thompson (R-Lakeville), awaits action by the Senate Health and Humans Services Committee.

The crux of the opposition revolves around the bill's impact on a "very personal" health care choice made available to women who wouldn't otherwise have the financial means to undergo the procedure, said Rep. Tina Liebling (DFL-Rochester).

"If we pass this bill, we are saying you get to make that choice, except if you're poor," Liebling said.

Rep. Duane Quam (R-Byron) supports the bill and said it will help serve as an advocate to those who have no voice. He added he doesn't believe using state funds for abortion procedures is a function of government.

Written opposition testimony from Hamline University Law Professor David Schultz pointed to a 1995 Minnesota Supreme Court decision in *Doe v. Gomez* that ruled unconstitutional a state law restricting the use of public funds for abortion-related medical services while permitting the use of such funds for comprehensive childbirth-related services.

The bill does not seek to outlaw abortion, but return to the taxpayers the issue of whether state taxpayers should be forced to

fund a practice that the majority of citizens oppose, said Jordan Bauer, a legislative associate for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life.

Scott said she is well aware of the *Doe v. Gomez* ruling and said it is within the Legislature's purview to address court decisions "we don't necessarily agree with."

— H. LONG

Prohibiting abortions after 20 weeks

Developments over the last few decades in prenatal medical technology have found that at as early as 20 weeks gestation, a human fetus can feel pain. That's the contention of those who support HF936, known as the "Pain-capable Unborn Child Protection Act."

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville), would prohibit abortions after that time.

The House Health and Human Services Reform Committee approved the bill March 16 and sent it to the House Civil Law Committee. Its companion, HF649, sponsored by Sen. Gretchen Hoffman (R-Vergas), awaits action by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

The Rev. Andrew Cozzens, on behalf of the Archdiocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Andrea Rau, right, a legislative associate for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, testifies before the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee March 16 in support of a bill that would prohibit abortions at or after 20 weeks gestational age. Rep. Mary Liz Holberg, left, sponsors the bill.

and the Minnesota Catholic Conference, said he recently baptized a baby born at 21 weeks at United Hospital.

"That baby is alive and healthy today," Cozzens said. "Of course it's the sad irony that in a hospital just next door, and in other places in Minnesota, a same aged child does not enjoy the protection of law that that child enjoys."

Alicia Hempel said she had to make the difficult decision last summer to have an abortion after 20 weeks gestation when she learned her unborn child was diagnosed with a fatal chromosomal disorder.

"With this proposed bill, I would have not been able to save my baby from the pain she would have endured from hours, maybe days and possibly even months until she died," Hempel said.

Rep. Diane Loeffler (DFL-Mpls) contested language in the bill that includes several findings of fact related to scientific research that indicates a fetus can feel pain at least 20 weeks after conception.

The bill itself is unconstitutional based on state and federal court rulings, said David Schultz, a constitutional law professor at Hamline University. "The Legislature should not be in the business of encouraging disrespect for the law and legislating from the bench."

In response, Rep. Mary Kiffmeyer (R-Big Lake) reminded the committee that a law is constitutional until ruled otherwise by a court.

"I am reminded of some chief justices on our Supreme Court, who have said a law is always constitutional until a court declares it is unconstitutional," Kiffmeyer said.

— H. LONG

Restricting EBT card use

Rep. Kurt Daudt (R-Crown) wants to make sure the state's poorest residents are not using their welfare benefits for purposes other than basic needs.

He sponsors HF171 that would place several new restrictions on residents enrolled in assistance programs that include the use of EBT cards.

Restrictions in the bill include a \$20 per month cash withdrawal limit and no use of the EBT card outside of Minnesota. It would also prohibit retailers from accepting an EBT card as payment without seeing a photo identification and increase the residency requirement to apply for an EBT card from 30 to 90 days.

The House Health and Human Services

Reform Committee approved the bill and sent it to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee. Its companion, SF75, sponsored by Sen. Doug Magnus (R-Slayton), awaits action by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Attorney Jessica Webster said she has strong concerns that the portion of the bill concerning durational residency requirements is unconstitutional.

Daudt believes the language of the bill finds a middle ground that ensures fraud is eliminated, while those who have assistance can still get it.

Rep. Kim Norton (DFL-Rochester) said she believes that the bill's restriction of cash withdrawal to eliminate misuse will not accomplish its intended purpose.

"You can't stop people from taking cash out of a machine and using it for what they want," Norton said.

The bill also requires liquor stores, gambling establishments and tattoo parlors to block EBT transactions at their establishments.

Representing the Welfare Rights Committee, Angel Buechner said she believes the bill dehumanizes users of EBT cards.

"A lot of people out here aren't living the high life, getting tattoos and drinking," she said. "We use that money to take care of our families."

— H. LONG

employees to furnish uniform or protective accessories made in this country.

A 2007 law made it illegal for colleges and universities to "enter into any agreement to market credit cards to undergraduate students at a postsecondary educational institution."

"Students have the right to make financial decisions on their own, and are already inundated with credit card offers," Nornes said. "To deny the institutions the possibility of some income from those agreements I guess would only be harmful to those schools."

Nornes wanted to eliminate a mandate that postsecondary institutions give students notice that criminal arrests, charges or convictions in certain cases could limit them for certain occupations and financial aid. After about 30 minutes of debate, he accepted an amendment from Rep. Kim Norton (DFL-Rochester) to remove the provision.

Norton told of a collegian who called her after being told that the ability to do a job in the field she was pursuing might be affected by a DUI. "It was helpful to the student to think about it."

"You could affect people's lives forever," added Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia). "It's a mandate that I haven't heard many complaints about, but I've heard many praises from folks that were warned ahead of time not to go into the field that they were going into."

— M. COOK

who began pursuit of a degree under the program but then were no longer eligible, by lowering the qualifying age back to 62.

It was held over March 10 by the House Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee for possible omnibus bill inclusion. A companion, SF546, sponsored by Senate President Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville), was held over March 7 by the Senate Higher Education Committee for possible omnibus bill inclusion.

"The seat would be empty were I not in it," said Kastner, who has 25 credits towards his degree with a 4.0 grade point average. "The school is collecting expense, so where is the cost?"

Rep. Terry Morrow (DFL-St. Peter) noted that a preliminary fiscal note shows an annual loss of \$434,250 to the university and \$214,682 to MnSCU. That assumes those caught in the middle would continue to attend at regular costs.

Rep. Bruce Vogel (R-Willmar) called that a "moot point" because most senior citizens wouldn't pay for the chair. "The universities wouldn't get that tuition anyway."

In addition to recouping costs, it's also a fairness issue, said Rep. Jeanne Poppe (DFL-Austin), who sponsored last year's bill. "We have a number of students at age 42 or 52 or 22 who would like to be able to pay the lowest cost they could for their college credits."

— M. COOK

Higher Education

Removing higher education mandates

Colleges might be able to again market credit cards to their students.

The provision was one of three mandate reliefs remaining in a bill held over by the House Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee March 15 for possible omnibus bill inclusion.

"We've been looking around this legislative session for relief from mandates, and I think these were a few ideas I have found by looking through the statutes, and I find are probably unnecessary at this time," said Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls).

Sponsored by Nornes, HF849, which has no Senate companion, would also remove requirements that:

- a public college or University of Minnesota bookstore must, to the extent possible, only sell apparel manufactured in the United States; and
- public employers must purchase or require

Lowering free senior tuition age

Ken Kastner was laid off due to the bad economy a couple of years ago, and like many unemployed people, he went back to school.

"I initially collected unemployment when I realized that a then-62-year-old man would find it almost impossible to get a job," he said. "In an attempt to better myself and further my computer knowledge, I started taking classes at St. Paul College to attain a web design certificate on the senior tuition discount program."

The program allows senior citizens to take courses at the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system at no charge, other than course charges for materials or services, if there are seats available after all tuition-paying students have been accounted for. If taken for credit, an administrative fee must be paid.

Last year, the qualifying age was raised from 62 to 66.

Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) sponsors HF821 that would help people like Kastner,

Public Safety

Donating public safety equipment

Since Sept. 11 some larger fire departments have received grants to upgrade their equipment, leaving them with the problem of how to dispose of used equipment that still may be in good working order. Donating to smaller departments is problematic because of the possible liability issue. So some departments simply mothball the equipment and some ship it to other countries.

Rep. Tara Mack (R-Apple Valley) sponsors HF695 that would extend civil immunity to a municipality that donates public safety equipment.

As amended by the House Civil Law Committee March 16, the bill now moves to the House floor. The companion, SF737, sponsored by Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove), awaits action by the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee.

"You can call this a Good Samaritan

proposal,” Mack said. The issue of concern to city officials is that equipment exposed to high heat situations may not perform as expected and the donating government jurisdiction could be held liable.

“You have departments that have equipment to donate and departments in need, but you can’t do so because of the liability issue. This is something that we would like to see resolved,” said George Esbensen, Eden Prairie fire chief.

Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) successfully offered an amendment to clarify the donation process and guard against intentional misrepresentation.

Joel Carlson, a lobbyist for the Minnesota Association for Justice, said cities accept gifts and donations by resolution, many times in “as-is condition.” Other states have addressed this, some even by setting up a state clearinghouse for surplus equipment, he said.

— L. SCHUTZ

Proposals for private prisons

Closed in 2010, the privately owned Prairie Correctional Facility in Appleton could once again house inmates, under a bill sponsored by Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake).

HF939 would allow the commissioner of administration to seek proposals from private entities to operate correctional facilities.

“This is a policy to allow private prisons to be part of the solution to save money and house inmates. ... The idea is how can we have a private-public mix of corrections and potentially save the taxpayers’ money,” Westrom told the House Civil Law Committee March 14.

The bill was approved and referred to the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee. There is no Senate companion.

The western Minnesota correctional facility is owned by Corrections Corporation of America and previously housed inmates from Washington and Minnesota. It closed when the states had room in their own facilities to house inmates.

Under Westrom’s bill, a committed person could be placed in either a privately run facility or one operated by the Department of Corrections. Current law specifies that the person be placed in a state-run facility. To be considered, a private institution would have to house prisoners at a cost at least 5 percent below the current per diem of the Department of Corrections.

The lack of other criteria, including



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

David Crist, deputy corrections commissioner, testifies before the House Civil Law Committee March 14 during discussion of a bill that would require private prison housing requests by the commissioner of corrections. Rep. Torrey Westrom, right, sponsors the bill.

program availability, concerns Rep. Melissa Hortman (DFL-Brooklyn Park). “This bill misses the mark. ... As a taxpayer I want two things – a prison that reduces recidivism and keep the bad guys and gals locked up. Why is there nothing in your bill about that?”

She successfully amended the bill to include a provision that recidivism statistics be part of the proposal request.

Rep. Bill Hilty (DFL-Finlayson) thinks the bill is an attempt to privatize prisons.

Westrom said the Department of Corrections could submit a proposal if it met the 5 percent threshold.

Hilty countered: “You know as well as I do how savings can take place — employing fewer staff, paying them as little as possible. And there is another possibility, you could cut back on how you treat prisoners ... quality of food, medical treatment.

David Crist, deputy commissioner for the Department of Corrections Facility Services Division, said the state had no complaints about the services and programs provided to inmates when they were housed at the Appleton facility.

— L. SCHUTZ

Ensuring fire safety account spending

People dial 911 expecting emergency response personnel to show up prepared. However, money paid by homeowners designated for firefighter training has not always gone there.

Since 2006, a 0.65 percent surcharge on homeowner and commercial fire insurance has been directed to the state fire safety account. Prior to that, Minnesota had a 0.5 percent state fire marshal tax, although it was not specifically identified on consumer policies.

The money is used for the Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education, staffing and operations of the State Fire Marshal Division and fire-related regional response teams and other fire service programs that have the potential for statewide impact.

In recent years, legislators have used some of the account balance to help fund the state’s deficit. For example, in fiscal year 2010, \$6.9 million was transferred to the General Fund and \$3.6 million in fiscal year 2011.

Sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), HF474 would require that money collected from the fire safety surcharge be used for fire safety purposes. The bill was held over March 10 by the House Public Safety and Crime



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

With a hearing room full of firefighters, Brooklyn Park Fire Chief Ken Prillaman testifies before the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee March 10 in support of a bill that would allocate fire safety account funds.

Prevention Policy and Finance Committee for possible omnibus bill inclusion. A companion, SF744, sponsored by Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen (R-Alexandria), awaits action by the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee.

Another Smith-sponsored bill held over by the committee, HF609, would ensure that grant recipients use the money for activities and programs, including training recommended by the Fire Service Advisory Committee. Its companion, SF503, sponsored by Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove), also awaits action by the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee.

"Minnesota currently ranks between 44th and 47th in spending for fire service, depending on how you measure that on a per capita basis," said Brooklyn Park Fire Chief Ken Prillaman.

He said many departments, especially those staffed by volunteers and paid on-call personnel, rely on the services of the fire marshal and the surcharge dollars are crucial for training purposes.

— M. Cook

Consecutive, not concurrent

Legislative intent of a 1997 law has not always been followed when an inmate assaults a correctional officer.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound) is trying to make the law even more clear with HF439.

Heard March 15 by the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee, the bill was held over for possible omnibus bill inclusion. It has no Senate companion.

Smith said the intent of the Legislature was that a prisoner sentenced for assaulting a correctional officer would serve their time consecutively, not concurrently. "In some of the cases, the courts were simply ignoring the legislative intent, ignoring the statute and imposing the time concurrently."

To rectify the situation the statute would be changed to say "shall run consecutively, not concurrently."

— M. Cook

Longer sex offender sentences

Predatory sex offenders could be spending many more years in custody.

Sponsored by Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Good Thunder), HF6 would create an indeterminate sentencing structure for such criminals.

Approved as amended March 15 by the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention

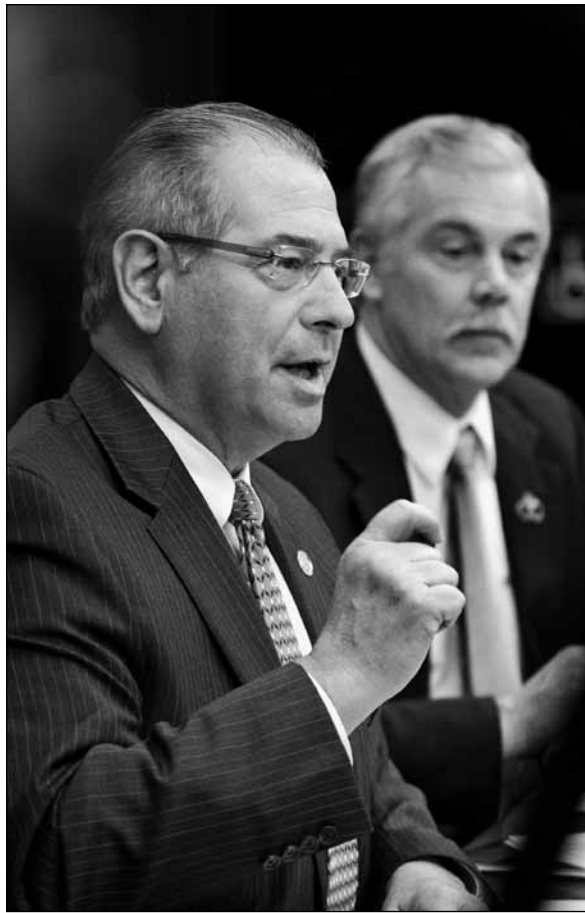


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman testifies before the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Committee March 15 in support of a bill that would increase the penalty for criminal sexual conduct. Rep. Tony Cornish, right, sponsors the bill.

Policy and Finance Committee, the bill was held over two days later by the House Judiciary Policy and Finance Committee for possible omnibus bill inclusion. A companion, SF102, sponsored by Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen (R-Alexandria), awaits action by the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee.

Under the bill, a two-phase trial would occur. Phase one would determine the guilt or innocence of a defendant. Once convicted, a jury would then determine beyond a reasonable doubt if the person is a predatory offender.

Rep. Sheldon Johnson (DFL-St. Paul) and Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) expressed concern about having a jury make that decision, rather than using a professional risk assessment approach.

"I disagree that a jury in seeing someone for a few hours can determine better whether they might reoffend than somebody who's an expert working with them for a few years," Mullery said. "But those are things we can work with as we progress on this. I

think it's a very good first step."

A person convicted of a first-through fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct, who is proven to be a predatory sex offender, shall serve "a minimum of twice the presumptive sentence for this offense, and a maximum of 60 years," Cornish said. "After the mandatory minimum sentence is served, if the convicted person wants to be released under conditional release, he must petition the commissioner of corrections."

The public has overwhelmingly said it expects something drastic to be done with predatory sex offenders, Cornish said.

We don't want a lot of people incarcerated, but we want to protect society against repeat offenders, said Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman.

The state's sex offender program is expected to double its population in the next decade, according to Cornish. "It's a foregone conclusion ... we're going to have to look at a bonding bill and committing to a program that hasn't

successfully graduated anybody yet." The program, enacted in 1994, costs about three times as much as incarceration in a state prison.

"The main crux of the bill is we can't afford to do what we're doing," he said. "We need to put the worst ones away."

— M. Cook

Where to house short-term offenders

The short-term offender program that allowed offenders with less than six months remaining on their sentence to serve that time in a local jail was eliminated in 2009.

Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Good Thunder) would like it reinstated.

He sponsors HF1033 that would require offenders with a felony conviction to spend the last 180 days of their sentence at a county jail, workhouse or work farm.

It was held over March 16 by the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee for possible omnibus bill inclusion. There is no Senate companion.

The bill is expected to save the state \$5.7 million in the upcoming biennium and \$8.8 million in the 2014-2015 biennium, assuming no reimbursement to counties.

"The short-term offender program is a transfer of state costs and responsibilities onto counties," said Dakota County Commissioner Nancy Schouweiler. "Based on actual numbers of short-term offenders from the last year of this program, the cost borne by counties of housing these inmates statewide for an entire year will exceed \$7 million."

Rep. Sheldon Johnson (DFL-St. Paul) said it cost Ramsey County more than \$1 million in 2009 to house short-term offenders. "At a time when we're looking at cutting county program aid, LGA and the like, it just doesn't make any sense," he said.

Schouweiler noted there would likely be a corresponding increase in medical and mental health costs placed on local units of government, at a time medication costs continue to increase.

Jim Franklin, executive director of the Minnesota Sheriff's Association, said the program started in the early-2000s when there was a bed shortage in state prisons. At the time, no data was available on costs, but now data exists to raise concerns.

"The increased discipline issues we deal with, the grievance issues we deal with, the lawsuits that we deal with all come back to the county and cumulatively add more to our dwindling resources," he said.

Franklin also noted that jails can't all offer programming that prisons do, including that for mental health issues or substance abuse.

— M. COOK

Recreation & Tourism

Four fairs for St. Louis County

The state's largest county wants to hold four different county fairs, and is asking for help from the Legislature to do so.

With more than 6,800 square miles,

St. Louis County is as big as the states of Delaware and Connecticut combined.

But Rep. Carly Melin (DFL-Hibbing) said it's unclear whether state law permits the county to appropriate money for multiple fairs, and also whether all four fairgrounds are exempt from property taxes. She sponsors HF917 that would clarify the law.

The House Government Operations and Elections Committee approved the bill March 16 and sent it to the House Taxes Committee. There is no Senate companion.

Melin said only one of the four fairgrounds is currently exempt from paying property taxes. County Intergovernmental Affairs Director John Ongaro said a law enacted two years ago requires all four to prove their tax-exempt status.

"The other three are basically real tiny fairs, and just to go through the paperwork ... would be quite onerous on them," he said.

Also, unlike in other counties, none of the fairs occur on county-owned property, which Ongaro said creates other complications. He

RALLY ROUND THE FLAG



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Adam Harris from the Minnesota History Center, from left, Rep. Kent Eken, Rep. Tim Mahoney, Jim Peterson from the History Center, Rep. Chris Swedzinski and Rep. Jeanne Poppe gather around the 1862 28th Virginia Battle Flag as part of the March 10 History Matters Day. The flag was captured by Pvt. Marshall Sherman of Company C, First Minnesota Volunteer Regiment at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863.

said the Revenue Department never intended to start taxing county fairs, and supports the bill.

— N. BUSSE

Red Wing golf course sale authorized

The City of Red Wing is hoping to let a private investor buy its municipally owned golf course, but first it needs permission from state lawmakers.

Rep. Tim Kelly (R-Red Wing) sponsors HF1017 that would grant that permission. The House Government Operations and Elections Committee approved the bill March 14 and sent it to the House floor. Sen. John Sterling Howe (R-Red Wing) sponsors the companion, SF779, which awaits action by the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee.

Red Wing owns Mississippi National Golf Links, a 36-hole public golf course. The city contracts with a private firm to run it, but still ends up paying certain capital and maintenance costs. Brian Peterson, the city's planning director, said selling the course would save local taxpayers money.

"A proposed sale of this nature would result in reducing budgetary pressure on the city without reducing the service levels, because it would still operate as a golf course," Peterson said.

The land was declared surplus state property in the 1970s, and Red Wing obtained it from the state by way of a special law passed in 1976. Peterson said it's unclear whether the law allows the city to sell the land, so city officials need lawmakers to grant them the authority.

Kelly's bill would give the city statutory authority to sell the golf course. He said it would save the city \$200,000 a year in maintenance costs. To help facilitate the sale, the bill would also give the city ownership of the road leading to the course facilities. Currently the city has an easement on the road.

At least one committee member was pleased to hear that the course would remain open.

"This is probably my favorite golf course that I go to. I just think it's a gem," said Rep. Bev Scalze (DFL-Little Canada).

— N. BUSSE

State Government

Helping CAP employees get insured

Community action agencies may soon be eligible to participate in a statewide

insurance pool for public employees.

Minnesota currently has 28 community action agencies — private nonprofits focused on eliminating poverty and helping people become self-sufficient. The agencies employ a combined total of about 5,000 employees around the state.

Some have had trouble finding affordable health insurance plans for their staff, according to Rep. Morrie Lanning (R-Moorhead). He sponsors HF789 that would allow them participate in the state's Public Employee Insurance Program, which provides insurance benefits to local government employees.

"I have worked extensively with community action agencies around the state ... and they are a very, very important service to people who have great needs," Lanning said.

The House Government Operations and Elections Committee approved the bill March 15 and sent it to the House floor. There is no Senate companion.

Arnie Anderson, executive director of the Minnesota Community Action Partnership, said it is unlikely that all 5,000 community action employees would participate. He said the bill would primarily benefit those in Greater Minnesota, who have a hard time finding affordable insurance plans.

"In the greater metropolitan area, it's much easier to get competitive bids ... this bill before you today is basically to offer one additional option for Greater Minnesota," he said.

Mike Thorsteinson, executive director of Three Rivers Community Action, said annual insurance premiums for his staff

TARGETS REACTION

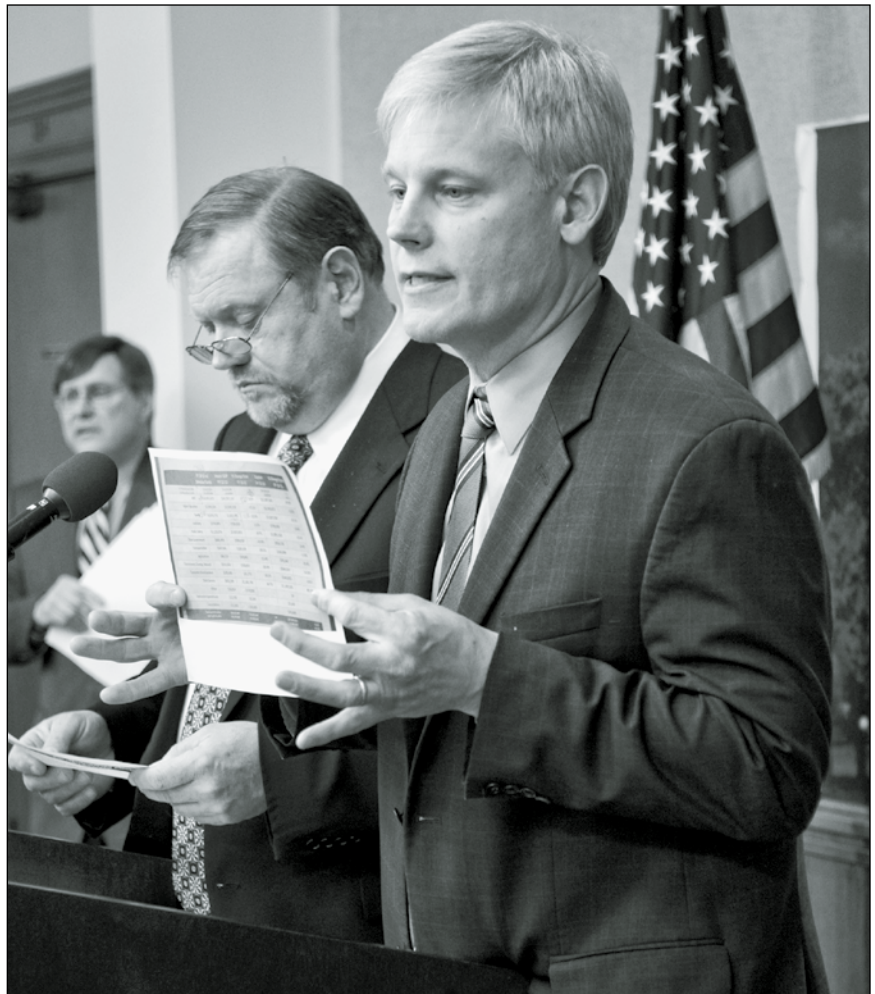


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

House Minority Leader Paul Thissen, right, reacts March 10 to the House Republican's budget targets saying that property taxes will rise if their budget is approved by the members. Senate Minority Leader Tom Bakk, center and Sen. Richard Cohen, ranking Senate minority member on the Senate Finance Committee also appeared at the news conference to react to the majority's budget targets.

have risen from \$130,000 five years ago to \$360,000 because they can't find another competitive bid. He estimates the additional cost prevents them from hiring five to six new staff members.

— N. BUSSE

Fewer deputy commissioners sought

Minnesota might save \$5.5 million annually by cutting 42 deputy commissioner positions at state agencies.

Rep. Kirk Stensrud (R-Eden Prairie) sponsors HF1024 that would require all state agencies to have no more than one deputy commissioner. Only the Department of Veterans Affairs would be exempted from the change.

Stensrud said the bill is based on a study produced by the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees on the number of managerial positions in state government. He said the bill assumes that these upper middle-management jobs would be eliminated, and that the deputy commissioners would not simply move into new jobs at the agencies.

"I think in these times we have to look at ways to streamline and get more done with less overhead," he said.

The House State Government Finance Committee laid the bill over March 14 for possible inclusion in its omnibus finance bill.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) questioned why the bill would exempt the Veterans Affairs Department. She argued that if the Department of Corrections, which is a larger and more complex agency, needs only one deputy commissioner, that veterans affairs should be no different.

"Do you know so much about these departments to say that veterans services needs two and corrections needs one?" she said.

Sen. Ted Lillie (R-Lake Elmo) sponsors the companion, SF739, was held over for possible inclusion in an omnibus bill by the Senate State Government Innovation and Veterans Committee on March 14.

— N. BUSSE

'Human capital bonds' approved

Supporters hope an innovative pay-for-performance program will provide a new model for how the state funds social services in the future.

Sponsored by Rep. Keith Downey (R-Edina), HF681 would create a pilot program for contracting out certain state services to private nonprofits. Using appropriation bonds, the state would establish

a pool of money out of which contractors would be paid based on documented savings they provide to the state.

The House Government Operations and Elections Committee approved the bill March 17 and referred it to the House State Government Finance Committee.

The concept is known as "human capital bonding." Downey said the pilot would be modeled after Twin Cities RISE! — a program that helps poor people and convicted felons find gainful employment. In that program, the state provides money to the group only when its clients find jobs and when they've had employer-provided health insurance for a year. Savings to the state come in the form of increased tax revenue and reduced costs for incarceration.

Steve Rothschild, the founder of Twin Cities RISE! and a former General Mills executive, said the cost of repaying the bonds would be recouped through savings provided by the service providers. He said the concept is a "win-win-win" for taxpayers, nonprofits and investors alike.

Rep. Ryan Winkler (DFL-Golden Valley) questioned whether service providers might try to game the system by influencing the standards that are used to measure their performance.

"You have to make sure that the outcomes you're measuring are the most important ones," Winkler said.

The bill includes a line for an appropriation for the bonds, but it does not include a dollar amount yet. Sen. Julie Rosen (R-Fairmont) sponsors the companion, SF434, which awaits action by the Senate State Government Innovation and Veterans Committee.

— N. BUSSE

Taxes

Bill aims to help lower income earners

The House Taxes Committee got its first look March 14 at the taxes portion of its omnibus bill (HF42), which over fiscal years 2012 and 2013 anticipates a \$2.96 billion General Fund reduction, and would provide breaks to those in the lower to middle tax brackets. However, with more testimony to come yet this week and the need to roll in the property tax and local tax division provisions, a lot could change before the committee acts on the bill, most likely March 19.

Sponsored by Committee Chairman Greg Davids (R-Preston), the bill would reduce the rate those in the lower and middle brackets

pay. Income taxpayers in the 5.35 percent bracket would see a 0.20 percent reduction over the biennium. Those in the 7.05 percent bracket would drop to 6.85 percent in 2012, but would not experience a reduction in 2013. The cost over the biennium would be \$221.3 million to the General Fund.

In response to the proposal, Gov. Mark Dayton said the bill would benefit higher income earners. According to information prepared by the Department of Revenue, a taxpayer with an income between \$30,000 and \$49,999 would see a tax cut of \$26 in 2012, while those with a federally adjusted gross income of \$250,000 to \$499,999 would see a cut of \$206.

Also of note, the bill:

- calls for \$7 million over the 2012-2013 fiscal biennium to establish a new Minnesota Science and Technology Fund to help funnel dollars to research and development programs through grants and a possible commercialized research program;
- would reduce the state general levy for commercial industrial property by \$49.9 million over the next biennium;
- would eliminate sales tax paid by communities for water used for public safety and the tax paid by consumers on ring tones; and
- would move to reinstate a reciprocity agreement with Wisconsin for those working in one state and living in the other.

Approximately \$18.2 million is expected to be generated over the biennium by adding to the tobacco definition "moist snuff," also known as dipping tobacco. The bill provides a separate tobacco products excise tax for moist snuff equal to \$1.45 per ounce. There would also be \$18.5 million over the biennium to the General Fund from federal tax conformity for tax year 2010 only.

The companion, SF27, sponsored by Sen. Julianne Ortman (R-Chanhassen), has been laid over by the Senate Taxes Committee for possible omnibus bill inclusion.

— L. SCHUTZ

Property tax changes keep changing

Mayors expecting to testify on proposed local government aid reductions and a property tax freeze were caught off-guard when the bill containing the provisions took somewhat of a U-turn.

The House Property and Local Tax Division report in the form of HF481, rolled out on March 12, called for reductions to



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, left, and St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman answer questions March 16 from members of the House Property and Local Tax Division about the proposed Local Government Aid cuts to their cities.

Local Government Aid that would lead to a phase-out of the program in 2014. It also proposed changes to the market value credit program, disparity reduction aid and payment in lieu in taxes.

But the March 16 morning's meeting was the start of several hours of testimony on the bill that was substantially altered by an amendment from its sponsor, Rep. Linda Runbeck (R-Circle Pines), the division chairwoman. The bill will most likely be rolled into the omnibus taxes bill (HF42).

Through her successful amendment, the property tax freeze provision was gone; the state's largest cities would be getting even less LGA than proposed; and some state mandates to counties, known as maintenance of effort requirements, would be suspended for 2012 and 2013, under certain conditions. Also, long-debated changes to the Green Acres and rural preserves legislation were now included; the reduction proposed to the renter's refund program was increased; and the homeowner property tax refund program would be restructured with fewer taxpayers being eligible.

"These are pretty significant changes to the previous (bill)," said Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth), who asked for more time to consider the changes so that amendments could be presented when the division reconvened.

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman said the bill "guts" the strong vitality of the state's largest

cities and "puts before us untenable choices."

He said he has prioritized public safety, and due to federal funds they have put more officers on the street. "I'm not here to prognosticate what the cuts will look like," he said.

Under the new provisions in Runbeck's bill: suburbs would retain their 2011 aid, but would see a 75 percent decrease in 2012; Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth would see in 2011 75 percent of the 2010 aid, and 50 percent of the 2010 aid in 2012; and Greater Minnesota would see no change to their aid formula.

Rep. Joe McDonald (R-Delano), a former mayor, said LGA is supposed to supplement and help fundamental services such as public works, fire and police. "If first class cities can't generate enough income to supplement just public safety, fire, police and public works then we have a problem."

— L. SCHUTZ

Transportation

Filing fee increase proffered

In an effort to help the state's deputy registrars cover their expenses, the state's filing fee for motor vehicle transactions, such as registration renewals and title transfers, could increase by \$1.50.

Sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker), HF347 was approved on a

split-voice vote March 14 by the House Transportation Policy and Finance Committee, and sent to the House Ways and Means Committee. A companion, SF368, sponsored by Sen. David Senjem (R-Rochester), awaits action by the Senate Finance Committee.

The current \$4.50 filing fee for renewals has not increased since 2001, and the \$8.50 fee for title transactions has not increased since 2005.

Of the state's 175 deputy registrars, about two-thirds exist where a county or city offers the service, and about one-third are private, such as at a jewelry store in Pine River. Registrars stock their own offices with necessary supplies and equipment, such as computers and faxes. Filing fees must cover all operational costs; there are no state subsidies.

While cities and counties can provide financial assistance to keep the public registrars open, the privates do not necessarily have that backup.

"Living in rural Minnesota, folks don't like to do it online or in the mail. ... They'd rather go to our local deputy registrars," Howes said. "They honestly, quite frankly, need this money to stay in business."

He said deputy registrars perform about 5 million transactions annually, while the state does about 800,000. "Imagine if they all went out of business. The state then would be doing all of them and I'm sure they'd be at this committee asking for more FTE's or more funding."

Without this increase, supporters said changes would likely include reduced staff, reduced hours or registrars closing. Many transactions, such as titling or transferring a vehicle, must be done in person.

People assume these are state offices or state employees, but they are not, said Jim Hirst, a lobbyist representing the Minnesota Deputy Registrar's Association. He said 65 percent of public registrars lost money last year; 38 percent of privates.

Can't wait a week for your news from the House?

When something important happens on the House floor or in a committee meeting, you'll know about it by subscribing to Session Daily.

Subscribers receive daily e-mail alerts whenever new articles are posted.

Go to: www.house.mn/hinfo/sdaily.asp
To subscribe, click on Subscribe to Session Daily e-mail updates. RSS is also available.

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

MARCH 14 - 17, 2011

HOUSE FILES 1050 - 1197

Monday, March 14

HF1050-Hilty (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Regional Earl Ellens Park and Riverside Center as trailhead for the Willard Munger State Trail funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1051-Lanning (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Buffalo-Red River Watershed District flood hazard mitigation grant funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1052-Beard (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Energy customers permitted to seek exemptions from a utility's conservation investment program and clarifying changes made.

HF1053-Downey (R)

Education Reform

Parents empowered to request school district intervention in a persistently low-performing school.

HF1054-Abeler (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

Elderly and disabled individuals self-directed supports option modified.

HF1055-Lenczewski (DFL)

Capital Investment

Old Cedar Avenue Bridge appropriations modified.

HF1056-Davnie (DFL)

Education Finance

Targeted family outreach activities grant program created and money appropriated.

HF1057-McDonald (R)

Health & Human Services Reform

Medical Assistance dental coverage expanded for adults.

HF1058-McDonald (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

Critical access dental providers criteria and payment methods modified, and rulemaking prohibited for the critical access dental program.

HF1059-Loon (R)

Taxes

Education tax credit equity and opportunity provided.

HF1060-Beard (R)

Civil Law

"Personnel data" definition modified; data obtained for design-build transportation projects, adopt-a-highway program related data and mileage-based road users data classified; and traffic accident related data provisions modified.

HF1061-Urdahl (R)

Legacy Funding Division

Legacy funds recipient reports required.

HF1062-Urdahl (R)

Judiciary Policy & Finance

President and Congress urged to pardon Chaska.

HF1063-Murray (R)

State Government Finance

Counties permitted to perform private audit meeting standards of state auditor.

HF1064-Benson, J. (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Crow Wing State Park land purchase funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1065-Mahoney (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

St. Paul; summer youth employment program grants awarded and money appropriated.

HF1066-Johnson (DFL)

Higher Education Policy & Finance

Science Education Center at Metropolitan State University funding provided.

HF1067-Nelson (DFL)

Transportation Policy & Finance

Rail bank property prohibited activities provisions modified and misdemeanor penalty imposed.

HF1068-Beard (R)

Transportation Policy & Finance

Trunk highway fund expenditures report required.

HF1069-Downey (R)

Education Reform

Education boards created, and school boards allowed to reorganize as education boards.

HF1070-Howes (R)

Taxes

Local government aid distribution modified.

HF1071-Norton (DFL)

Health & Human Services Reform

Autism spectrum disorder coverage provided.

HF1072-Cornish (R)

Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance

Minnesota State Retirement System; employment position covered by correctional state employees retirement plan revised, vesting period modified for a retirement annuity for the correctional state employees retirement plan and service credit transfer permitted to the general state employees retirement plan by certain correctional employees.

HF1073-Hansen (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Legislative Environment Commission established; Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, Clean Water Council and Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources eliminated; water system improvement loan program eliminated; appropriations from outdoor heritage fund modified; and appointments provided.

HF1074-Westrom (R)

Government Operations & Elections

Advisory Committee for Technology Standards for Accessibility and Usability expiration date extended, advisory committee codified and money appropriated.

HF1075-Mack (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

Single public health care program plan recommendation required, eligibility and enrollment processes simplified, systems automated and report required.

HF1076-LeMieur (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Administrative, rulemaking, enforcement and safety and health provisions modified.

HF1077-Anderson, P. (R)

Education Finance

General education small school revenue component created.

HF1078-Garofalo (R)

Education Finance

Perpich Center for Arts Education status changed from a state agency to a charter school.

HF1079-Holberg (R)

Taxes

Tobacco product definition modernized.

HF1080-Woodard (R)

Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance

Metropolitan Council authorized to disqualify criminal offenders from becoming bus and light rail vehicle operators.

HF1081-Lenczewski (DFL)

Taxes

Individual income tax rates reduced.

HF1082-Beard (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Cold weather rule electronic notification authorized.

HF1083-Runbeck (R)

Taxes

Homeowner property tax refund modified.

HF1084-Davids (R)

Taxes

Wisconsin reciprocity agreement negotiation directed and its termination permitted only by law.

HF1085-Mahoney (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Lifetrack Resources funding appropriated from the Workforce Development Fund.

HF1086-McElfatrick (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

License recognition repealed for bordering states, fees established and technical changes made.

HF1087-McElfatrick (R)
Health & Human Services Reform
Nursing; criminal history record check required and money appropriated.

HF1088-Draskowski (R)
Government Operations & Elections
State agency natural disaster response provisions modified.

HF1089-Stensrud (R)
Taxes
Schedule of rates for individuals, estates and trusts rates reduced.

HF1090-Stensrud (R)
State Government Finance
Commissioner of Minnesota Management & Budget required to issue a proposal request and enter into a contract for dependent audit verification for state employee health plans.

HF1091-Lanning (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Basin boards establishment and taxing authority authorized, money appropriated and rulemaking required.

HF1092-Buesgens (R)
Education Reform
Qualified individuals receiving a retirement annuity allowed to serve as a coach during a sports season.

HF1093-Garofalo (R)
Education Finance
School district or charter school required to spend at least 70 percent of its total general operating expenditures on direct classroom expenditures.

HF1094-Shimanski (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
Disability motorcycle plate provided.

HF1095-Hosch (DFL)
Commerce & Regulatory Reform
Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association six-month preexisting condition limitation exception provided for children.

HF1096-Hosch (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Family assets for independence grants money appropriated.

HF1097-McNamara (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Land acquisition by exchange provided; peatland protection, recreational vehicle enforcement provisions, local recreation grant cash match requirement and Mineral Coordinating Committee modified; Blakeley State Wayside repealed and money appropriated.

HF1098-Mullery (DFL)
Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance
Seized animal disposition requirements changed and penalty imposed.

HF1099-Winkler (DFL)
Government Operations & Elections
Campaign financing; contribution and expenditure report filing required.

HF1100-Kriesel (R)
Commerce & Regulatory Reform
Boiler inspection provisions modified.

HF1101-Nornes (R)
Higher Education Policy & Finance
Postsecondary education provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF1102-Liebling (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Dental reimbursement for the Medical Assistance program modified.

HF1103-Mullery (DFL)
Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance
Assault of utility or postal service employee or contractor gross misdemeanor created.

HF1104-Howes (R)
Capital Investment
Appropriations canceled and corresponding bond sale authorizations reduced.

HF1105-Kiel (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
Pickup truck provisions modified.

HF1106-Kiel (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Money appropriated from parks and trails fund.

HF1107-Kiffmeyer (R)
Taxes
Currency, coins and bullion exempted from sales and use tax.

HF1108-Poppe (DFL)
Higher Education Policy & Finance
Salaries and payments of bonuses in contracts limited, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities organizational efficiency study required, centers of excellence phased out and appropriation use clarified.

HF1109-Smith (R)
Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance
DWI conviction driver's license revocation period provisions clarified and conformed.

HF1110-Mahoney (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Small business investment tax credit provisions modified.

HF1111-Petersen, B. (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Coon Rapids Dam Commission established, appointments provided and Coon Rapids Dam improvements pre-design and design money appropriated.

HF1112-Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
White Earth Band of Ojibwe Indians authorized to provide human services and public assistance programs and money appropriated.

HF1113-McFarlane (R)
Taxes
Ramsey County; mortgage registry and deed tax expiration authority removed.

HF1114-Anderson, P. (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance
Agricultural bioenergy grant funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1115-Anderson, P. (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Wildlife Management Area; adopt-a-WMA program created.

HF1116-Mack (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Human service public assistance fraud detection and business intelligence contract proposal request required.

HF1117-O'Driscoll (R)
Government Operations & Elections
Bond requirements for state depositories changed.

HF1118-Eken (DFL)
Education Finance
General education component created to support small school districts.

HF1119-Kiffmeyer (R)
Civil Law
Voter eligibility requirements conformed to constitutional requirements.

HF1120-Anderson, S. (R)
Taxes
Ring tone sales and use tax repealed.

HF1121-Hamilton (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance
Terrestrial pesticide application regulating authority clarified.

HF1122-Anderson, P. (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Terrestrial pesticide application regulating authority clarified.

HF1123-Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Reform
Prematurity task force established.

HF1124-Anderson, B. (R)
Veterans Services Division
Rehabilitation presumption established through a person's honorable military service following a prior offense.

HF1125-Howes (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Coon Rapids Dam renovation funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1126-Persell (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Deer River; regional community facility funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1127-Hansen (DFL)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Water supply and groundwater degradation prevention provided and money appropriated from the Clean Water Fund.

HF1128-Slawik (DFL)**State Government Finance**

Oakdale; veteran memorial funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1129-Beard (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

Local government variance granting provided.

HF1130-Nornes (R)**Higher Education Policy & Finance**

Student record and data use provided.

HF1131-Cornish (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Public safety service fee proceeds allocated.

HF1132-Eken (DFL)**Government Operations & Elections**

Legislator salary authorization council established, Compensation Council composition changed and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1133-Vogel (R)**Higher Education Policy & Finance**

Undergraduate stable tuition rate provided.

HF1134-Hoppe (R)**Commerce & Regulatory Reform**

Annuity product regulated, and National Association of Insurance Commissioners model regulation adopted relating to suitability in annuity transactions.

HF1135-Anderson, D. (R)**Civil Law**

Marriage dissolution education program participation required in marriage dissolution or legal separation proceedings involving minor children.

Wednesday, March 16

HF1136-Rukavina (DFL)**Education Finance**

Regional library system maintenance of effort formula modified.

HF1137-Rukavina (DFL)**Higher Education Policy & Finance**

Permanent university fund portion directed for a mining engineering program and forestry research.

HF1138-Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Reform**

Case management and personal care assistance appeals conference required.

HF1139-Hancock (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

Public safety equipment single source acquisition and long-term leasing authorized.

HF1140-Beard (R)**Transportation Policy & Finance**

Fixed guideway transit and rail line project requirements amended, governing capital requests requirements established and financial reporting amended.

HF1141-Gunther (R)**Taxes**

Teleworking credit created and telework expenses sales tax exemption provided.

HF1142-Kiffmeyer (R)**Health & Human Services Reform**

Health care provider requirements that are not required for federal compliance eliminated, and future reporting requirements sunset required.

HF1143-Kiffmeyer (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Qualified Medical Assistance enrollees and all MinnesotaCare enrollees required to receive basic services through an enrolled provider network, and major medical coverage provided to these enrollees.

HF1144-Cornish (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

Former employees in the state employee group insurance program specified notice required for termination of rights.

HF1145-Lenczewski (DFL)**Transportation Policy & Finance**

I-35W/I-494 interchange funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1146-Melin (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Central Iron Range Sanitary Sewer District money appropriated.

HF1147-Hausman (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Como Park Zoo and Conservatory money appropriated.

HF1148-Murdock (R)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Landfill cleanup program modified.

HF1149-Beard (R)**Transportation Policy & Finance**

Aeronautics activities money appropriated.

HF1150-Loeffler (DFL)**Government Operations & Elections**

Classified employees duties and rights specified.

HF1151-Eken (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles registered by an Indian tribal government to a tribal member exempted from registration with the state.

HF1152-Sanders (R)**Commerce & Regulatory Reform**

Pawnbrokers pledged goods return and location restrictions regulated.

HF1153-Slawik (DFL)**Education Finance**

Full-day kindergarten funding provided for qualified kindergarten programs.

HF1154-Eken (DFL)**Government Operations & Elections**

Single member district office, executive officer, judge, senator or representative election by a majority of the votes cast at the general election for the office provided for, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1155-Eken (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Mahnomen County; supplemental rate increased for group residential provider.

HF1156-Eken (DFL)**Taxes**

Long-term care tax imposed to fund services.

HF1157-Anderson, B. (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance**

Public Utilities Commission required to submit proposed legislation establishing protocol for investigating complaints of stray voltage on dairy and livestock operations and task force created.

HF1158-Peterson, S. (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Startup business loan guarantee program developed, loan guarantee trust fund established, report required and money appropriated.

HF1159-Drazkowski (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

State employee and elected official salary reduced by 6 percent.

HF1160-Banaian (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Boys and Girls Club grant funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1161-Cornish (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Education and program development requirements amended and certificates of compliance provisions amended.

HF1162-Ward (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Nonnative species provisions modified, permits to control or harvest aquatic plants requirements modified and criminal and civil penalties provided.

HF1163-Gunther (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Accountant fees modified.

HF1164-Murdock (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

JOBZ provisions modified.

HF1165-Abeler (R)**Transportation Policy & Finance**

Ramsey Northstar Commuter Rail Station funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1166-Gottwalt (R)**Health & Human Services Reform**

State permitted to contract with third-party administrators to provide Medical Assistance benefits, competitive request for proposal process required, and mandatory participation by health maintenance organizations repealed.

HF1167-Smith (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

Cedarview Care Center and Traverse Care Center added to covered privatization list.

HF1168-Smith (R)
Government Operations & Elections
Municipal or independent nonprofit firefighting corporation contributions permitted in excess of the applicable funding requirements.

HF1169-Downey (R)
Taxes
Resale ticket purchase provisions modified.

HF1170-Gunther (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Worker classification regulation, penalties and fees modified.

HF1171-Westrom (R)
Government Operations & Elections
Nonprofit organizations receiving a grant or direct appropriation from the state conditions imposed.

HF1172-Westrom (R)
State Government Finance
Revenue provided for legislative public information publications and legislative media productions and money appropriated.

HF1173-Brynaert (DFL)
Education Reform
Probationary and continuing contract teachers professional development and evaluation requirements further clarified.

HF1174-Hoppe (R)
Commerce & Regulatory Reform
Private, nonprofit college on-sale liquor license provided with conditions.

HF1175-Buesgens (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
Scott County; additional deputy registrar of motor vehicles authorized.

HF1176-McFarlane (R)
Education Finance
Alternative facility revenue uses modified.

HF1177-Falk (DFL)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Community energy outreach and assistance promotion grants provided.

HF1178-Loeffler (DFL)
Government Operations & Elections
Unpaid leave job retention program created.

HF1179-McFarlane (R)
Education Finance
Pupil transportation provisions modified, Department of Education's role clarified in maintaining training programs, lift bus use included in the category or revenue authorized for reimbursement and actual contracted transportation costs included as a method for allocating pupil transportation costs.

Thursday, March 17

HF1180-Mullery (DFL)
Commerce & Regulatory Reform
Homeowner loan modification request uniform process provided for use by lenders and mortgage lenders required to record proof of compliance prior to foreclosure.

HF1181-Howes (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
School bus safety and standards provisions modified and standards abolished for type III vehicles used for transporting students.

HF1182-Smith (R)
Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance
High-risk adult demonstration project continuation money appropriated.

HF1183-Melin (DFL)
State Government Finance
Central Iron Range Sanitary Sewer District wastewater treatment plant and sewer system improvements funding provided, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF1184-Anderson, S. (R)
Health & Human Services Reform
Family day care requirements modified.

HF1185-Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Reform
Contracting procedures between health care providers and health plan companies adjusted.

HF1186-McElpatrick (R)
Health & Human Services Reform
State health care program purchasing county roles and rights modified, county-based purchasing arrangements authorized and administrative reporting reduction process established.

HF1187-Greiling (DFL)
Education Finance
Early childhood and family, prekindergarten through grade 12 and adult education, including general education, education excellence, special programs,

facilities and technology, nutrition and accounting, libraries, early childhood education, prevention, self-sufficiency and lifelong learning, and state agencies provided for, rulemaking authorized and money appropriated.

HF1188-Loon (R)
Education Reform
Early childhood services and programs coordination provided to achieve full kindergarten readiness for all Minnesota children by 2020.

HF1189-Beard (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Conservation improvement program exemption provisions modified.

HF1190-Greene (DFL)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
Minors age 16 or older allowed to file petitions for orders for protection on their own behalf.

HF1191-Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Reform
Social worker licensure provisions modified.

HF1192-Beard (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
Airport runway preservation funding provided.

HF1193-Beard (R)
Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance
Municipalities and electric cooperative associations regulations amended with respect to energy conservation programs.

HF1194-Crawford (R)
Education Reform
Teacher due process procedures clarified.

HF1195-Anderson, S. (R)
Commerce & Regulatory Reform
Pay day lenders regulated and fees and charges authorized.

HF1196-Holberg (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
Metropolitan area transportation sales and use tax funds allocated for transit operations.

HF1197-Holberg (R)
Transportation Policy & Finance
Temporary transfers authorized from the metropolitan livable communities fund accounts and the right-of-way loan acquisition fund for transit operating deficits; funding sources modified for metropolitan livable communities fund accounts.

Frequently called numbers		
Area code 651		
House Public Information Services		
175 State Office Building	296-2146	
Toll-free	800-657-3550	
Chief Clerk of the House		
211 Capitol	296-2314	
House Index		
211 Capitol	296-6646	
Meeting Call line, House	296-9283	
House Research		
600 State Office Building	296-6753	
Senate Information		
231 Capitol	296-0504	
Toll-free	888-234-1112	
Secretary of the Senate		
231 Capitol	296-2344	
Voice mail/order bills	296-2343	
Senate Index		
110 Capitol	296-2887	
Senate Counsel and Research		
G-17 Capitol	296-4791	
Governor's Office		
130 Capitol	201-3400	

2011-2012 Minnesota House of Representatives Members

District	Member/Party	Room*	Phone 651-296-	District	Member/Party	Room*	Phone 651-296-
48B	Abeler, Jim (R)	479	1729	57A	Kriesel, John (R)	451	4342
19A	Anderson, Bruce (R)	365	5063	50A	Laine, Carolyn (DFL)	287	4331
38A	Anderson, Diane (R)	525	3533	9A	Lanning, Morrie (R)	379	5515
13A	Anderson, Paul (R)	445	4317	34A	Leidiger, Ernie (R)	415	4282
43A	Anderson, Sarah (R)	549	5511	12B	LeMieur, Mike (R)	567	4247
3A	Anzelc, Tom (DFL)	307	4936	40B	Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)	317	4218
39B	Atkins, Joe (DFL)	209	4192	66A	Lesch, John (DFL)	315	4224
15B	Banaian, King (R)	411	6612	30A	Liebling, Tina (DFL)	357	0573
17B	Barrett, Bob (R)	413	5377	55A	Lillie, Leon (DFL)	281	1188
35A	Beard, Michael (R)	417	8872	59A	Loeffler, Diane (DFL)	335	4219
43B	Benson, John (DFL)	289	9934	56A	Lohmer, Kathy (R)	521	4244
30B	Benson, Mike (R)	515	4378	42B	Loon, Jenifer (R)	403	7449
37B	Bills, Kurt (R)	533	4306	37A	Mack, Tara (R)	557	5506
23B	Brynaert, Kathy (DFL)	327	3248	67A	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	237	4277
35B	Buesgens, Mark (R)	381	5185	65B	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	203	9714
45B	Carlson Sr., Lyndon (DFL)	283	4255	9B	Marquart, Paul (DFL)	313	6829
58B	Champion, Bobby Joe (DFL)	329	8659	41B	Mazorol, Pat (R)	581	7803
61A	Clark, Karen (DFL)	277	0294	19B	McDonald, Joe (R)	523	4336
24B	Cornish, Tony (R)	437	4240	3B	McElfatrick, Carolyn (R)	545	2365
8B	Crawford, Roger (R)	421	0518	53B	McFarlane, Carol (R)	597	5363
17A	Daudt, Kurt (R)	487	5364	57B	McNamara, Denny (R)	375	3135
31B	Davidson, Greg (R)	585	9278	5B	Melin, Carly (DFL)	309	0172
62A	Davnie, Jim (DFL)	215	0173	65A	Moran, Rena (DFL)	227	5158
52B	Dean, Matt (R)	459	3018	23A	Morrow, Terry (DFL)	211	8634
52A	Dettmer, Bob (R)	473	4124	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262
6A	Dill, David (DFL)	273	2190	10B	Murdock, Mark (R)	593	4293
47A	Dittrich, Denise (DFL)	311	5513	64A	Murphy, Erin (DFL)	345	8799
33B	Doepeke, Connie (R)	579	4315	6B	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	343	2676
41A	Downey, Keith (R)	407	4363	27A	Murray, Rich (R)	439	8216
28B	Drazkowski, Steve (R)	401	2273	40A	Myhra, Pam (R)	517	4212
2A	Eken, Kent (DFL)	243	9918	46A	Nelson, Michael V. (DFL)	229	3751
16A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	509	6746	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946
1A	Fabian, Dan (R)	431	9635	29B	Norton, Kim (DFL)	233	9249
20A	Falk, Andrew (DFL)	239	4228	14A	O'Driscoll, Tim (R)	369	7808
11B	Franson, Mary (R)	429	3201	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	301	4199
26B	Fritz, Patti (DFL)	253	8237	31A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637
36B	Garofalo, Pat (R)	537	1069	32A	Peppin, Joyce (R)	503	7806
7B	Gauthier, Kerry (DFL)	225	4246	4A	Persell, John (DFL)	223	5516
15A	Gottwalt, Steve (R)	485	6316	49B	Petersen, Branden (R)	577	5369
60A	Greene, Marion (DFL)	331	0171	45A	Peterson, Sandra (DFL)	337	4176
54A	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	393	5387	27B	Poppe, Jeanne (DFL)	291	4193
25A	Gruenhagen, Glenn (R)	575	4229	29A	Quam, Duane (R)	569	9236
24A	Gunther, Bob (R)	591	3240	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	303	0170
48A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	409	2439	53A	Runbeck, Linda (R)	583	2907
22B	Hamilton, Rod (R)	559	5373	51A	Sanders, Tim (R)	449	4226
2B	Hancock, David (R)	529	4265	54B	Scalze, Bev (DFL)	259	7153
39A	Hansen, Rick (DFL)	247	6828	22A	Schomacker, Joe (R)	433	5505
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	255	3824	49A	Scott, Peggy (R)	477	4231
61B	Hayden, Jeff (DFL)	389	7152	18A	Shimanski, Ron (R)	367	1534
46B	Hilstrom, Debra (DFL)	261	3709	44A	Simon, Steve (DFL)	279	9889
8A	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	207	4308	55B	Slawik, Nora (DFL)	245	7807
36A	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	453	6926	63B	Slocum, Linda (DFL)	359	7158
34B	Hoppe, Joe (R)	563	5066	33A	Smith, Steve (R)	543	9188
60B	Hornstein, Frank (DFL)	213	9281	42A	Stensrud, Kirk (R)	553	3964
47B	Hortman, Melissa (DFL)	377	4280	21A	Swedzinski, Chris (R)	527	5374
14B	Hosch, Larry (DFL)	349	4373	63A	Thissen, Paul (DFL)	267	5375
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	491	2451	51B	Tillberry, Tom (DFL)	231	5510
7A	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228	21B	Torkelson, Paul (R)	371	9303
67B	Johnson, Sheldon (DFL)	217	4201	18B	Urdahl, Dean (R)	571	4344
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	353	4257	13B	Vogel, Bruce (R)	507	6206
26A	Kath, Kory (DFL)	201	5368	62B	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	251	4200
28A	Kelly, Tim (R)	565	8635	12A	Ward, John (DFL)	221	4333
56B	Kieffer, Andrea (R)	531	1147	38B	Wardlow, Doug (R)	551	4128
1B	Kiel, Debra (R)	423	5091	11A	Westrom, Torrey (R)	443	4929
16B	Kiffmeyer, Mary (R)	501	4237	44B	Winkler, Ryan (DFL)	321	7026
50B	Knuth, Kate (DFL)	323	0141	25B	Woodard, Kelby (R)	539	7065
20B	Koenen, Lyle (DFL)	241	4346	32B	Zellers, Kurt (R)	463	5502

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: KURT ZELLERS
MAJORITY LEADER: MATT DEAN
MINORITY LEADER: PAUL THISSEN

Session Weekly

Director

Barry LaGrave

Editor/Assistant Director

Lee Ann Schutz

Assistant Editor

Mike Cook

Art & Production Coordinator

Paul Battaglia

Writers

Kris Berggren, Nick Busse, Susan Hegarty,
Hank Long

Chief Photographer

Tom Olmscheid

Photographers

Kristin Schue, Andrew VonBank

Staff Assistants

Christy Novak, Angella Hanson

Intern

Callie Chamberlain

- To have Session Weekly mailed to you, subscribe online at www.house.mn/hinfo/subscribesw.asp or call 651-296-2146, 800-657-3550.
- Session Weekly Online is available at www.house.mn/sessionweekly.
- If you enjoy Session Weekly, please consider helping to defray production and mailing costs with a voluntary donation for the 2011 session.

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

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

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota Roads and Traffic Collisions

Estimated number of registered motor vehicles in Minnesota, in millions	4.8
Estimated number of licensed Minnesota drivers, in millions	3.9
Estimated number of miles driven annually in Minnesota, in billions	57
Miles of interstate routes running the length of the state	914
Percent of all Minnesota travel done on an interstate	22
Between 1990 and 2004, percent increase of vehicle miles traveled on Minnesota interstates	61
Current speed limit for rural interstate highways	70
Current speed limit for urban interstate highways	65
Percent of goods exported annually from Minnesota by truck	69
Percent of goods imported to Minnesota by truck	72
Number of traffic crashes in state in 2009	132,276
Number of people involved in these crashes	180,849
Percentage of drivers estimated to be wearing a seatbelt during an incident	90
Percentage of Minnesota drivers estimated to be wearing a seatbelt in 1986	20
Between 2007 and 2009, percent of speed-related fatalities in Minnesota occurring in rural areas	67
Alcohol-related crashes in Minnesota in 2009	3,931
Number of Minnesotans killed in crashes classified as alcohol-related in 2009	141
Percent of traffic accidents caused by distraction	25
Fine for texting while driving in Minnesota	\$300
Estimated yearly deer/vehicle crashes in state	35,000
Average repair cost of a car-deer collision	\$2,800
Miles per hour of Minnesota fastest speeding ticket issued	205
Number of people who have died on Highway 14 since 2000	25
Percent of drivers who report seeing speeding vehicles all or most of the time	60
Percent of drivers who report feeling less safe on the road today than five years ago	52

— C. CHAMBERLAIN

Sources: USA Today, Minnesota Safe Driving, Department of Public Safety's Office of Traffic Safety, KARE 11, Minnesota Public Radio, Driving Laws Organization, Minnesota Interstate Fact Sheet, Department of Transportation, AAA Foundation

Follow us on



facebook at: www.facebook.com/MNHouseInfo



Twitter at: twitter.com/MNHouseInfo



YouTube at: www.youtube.com/user/MNHouseInfo