

SESSION WEEKLY



REDISTRICTING: THE SLICE AND DICE

MEET MORE NEW MEMBERS

TAKING A NEW PATH TO TEACHING

HF93 - HF174

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION

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Flashback to 1991 and 2001

Rules committee urges restraint in Iraq

1991 - The United States and its allies went to war with Iraq on Jan. 16. Following more than three hours of emotional debate Jan. 15, the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee approved a resolution calling on the president to further negotiate with Iraq in an effort to avert the war.

"This is a sober, somber, serious moment, but we ought not try to supplant the feelings of Congress," said Rep. Sally Olsen (R-St. Louis Park).

"What we're doing here is urging the president, despite the power he's been granted by Congress, to pursue all possible non-war situations," said Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls.).

Because of the events in Iraq and Kuwait, Gov. Arne Carlson canceled his scheduled State of the State address on Jan. 16.

— Session Weekly Jan. 18, 1991

Drawing new lines

2001 - Even though it comes along just once every 10 years, the process is one of the most emotionally charged issues the Legislature has to deal with — agreeing to a redistricting plan. This year, the House is attempting an approach that's never been tried before — creating a bipartisan committee to develop a plan.

Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), the House Redistricting Committee chairman, pledged to work together with all members to create a fair and open process, "even though it seems inevitable that the courts eventually get involved."

— Session Weekly Jan. 19, 2001

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SESSION WEEKLY

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PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Parasa Chanramy teaches at the BEST Academy through the Teach for America program. Legislation is proposed to make it easier for people like her to become licensed.

Alternative teacher mindset

Tackling the achievement gap one classroom at a time

BY KRIS BERGGREN

The kindergarteners at the BEST Academy, a North Minneapolis charter school, are mostly Somali-American and eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Their teacher, Parasa Chanramy, is a recent college graduate from Oregon who didn't major in education.

Chanramy isn't just any starry-eyed do-gooder who likes kids. She's one of the 12 percent of 46,000 applicants selected last year by Teach for America to tackle the achievement gap, one class at a time.

An international affairs major at Lewis & Clark College, Chanramy volunteered at a Portland public school and studied education policy at Princeton University on a summer

fellowship. She completed 30 hours of "pre-work" required by TFA, including classroom observation, reading and instructional videos, then spent six weeks student teaching and learning pedagogy and practice at a school on Chicago's south side.

She relies on feedback from her academy colleagues and her TFA program advisor to continually improve her teaching. Chanramy

is pleased with her students' progress after half a year. She administers weekly quizzes and seven cumulative exams a year. Somali-speaking staff interpret during parent teacher conferences and translate her newsletter and progress reports. She sees about 60 percent of parents more than once a month.

"Are they learning what they need to learn to be a strong kindergarten scholar?" she wants to know. They are mastering basic alphabet sounds, how to blend those in words. "Some are even starting to read now. Seeing that is really fulfilling and rewarding as a teacher."

Two bills that would make it easier for teachers like Chanramy to become licensed await action by the House Education Finance Committee after the House Education Reform Committee approved them Jan 18.

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul) sponsors HF3, while House Education

First Reading continued on page 4

Finance Committee Chairman Pat Garofalo (R-Farmington) sponsors HF63. Both would require 200 hours of training and ongoing professional development and supervision. Candidates would be granted a two-year limited-term license as a step toward full licensure, and would be the teacher of record in the classroom.

Last year, contentious debate over alternative licensure pathways drove the education bill into the ground. Garofalo predicts a much brighter future now.

"All the data shows the reforms we are proposing are the right thing for Minnesota," he said. "I'm very confident, very optimistic that one of the big shining successes of the session will be education reform bills signed by Gov. Dayton."

A companion to Garofalo's bill, SF4, sponsored by Sen. Gen Olson (R-Minnetrista), awaits action by the Senate Education Committee. Mariani's bill has no Senate companion.

Stabilizing programs

HF3 would require all teacher preparation programs, including alternative pathways, to include a rigorous assessment of first-year teachers featuring student performance measures, self-reflection and supervisor input. The measure would meet the growing demand for data-driven evaluations, said Mariani, and would take the teeth out of the argument made frequently by Education Minnesota, the state's largest teachers' union, that nontraditional programs can't ensure quality teaching.

"The proof is in the pudding," he said.

Only 3.3 percent of the state's 56,000 teachers don't have a standard license, but have some variation of a provisional one. Of those, 90 are Teach for America members, placed in 27 districts: Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center public schools, plus 25 charter schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

"That demand has grown significantly since we started, mostly by word of mouth," said Daniel Sellers, executive director of Teach for America Twin Cities.

Other "experimental approval" programs could benefit, said Board of Teaching Executive Director Karen Balmer, such as a Mandarin Chinese program based at St. Cloud State University and a residency model akin to a medical residency that's being developed. She said the existing waiver process is cumbersome for such programs.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Rep. Carlos Mariani, left, sponsor of an alternative pathway to teacher licensure proposal, and Kelly Wolfe, right, who represents Teach for America, listen as Shannon Blankenship answers a question by a member of the House Education Reform Committee during a hearing Jan. 18. Blankenship is the founder of Hiawatha Leadership Academy, a Minneapolis charter school.

Tackling the achievement gap...

Neither Garofalo or Mariani claim that alternative licensure paths are the panacea for what ails public schools, but agree they're one tool to tackle the achievement gap.

According to the Department of Education, while the overall high school graduation rate is 75 percent, it's 82 percent for white students, 68 percent for Asians, 45 percent for Hispanics, 44 percent for blacks and 41 percent for American Indian students.

"Decreased wages, fewer jobs and a lower quality of life are the consequences of not solving the achievement gap," Garofalo said. "In the long term we have an economic motivation to create jobs. It is also a moral imperative that every child deserves a quality teacher."

Some recent studies in other states indicate TFA teachers as equally or more effective than their traditionally trained counterparts, but Mariani said that shouldn't be blown out of proportion. He does not intend to vilify teachers, but hopes to jumpstart a new mindset within an old system.

"How is it that we've got a great school system that really produces bad outcomes with certain kids at a rate that is statistically significant?" Mariani said. "What you want to do is attract adults that have a fire, a focus, a passion and a fundamental, deep, unshakable belief in the capacity of these young students, who primarily are going to be low-income kids of color."

Shannon Blankenship, a former TFA teacher and founder of Hiawatha Leadership

Academy said they only hire people who have that kind of attitude, those who believe poor students can learn as well as other students and who are willing to invest in longer hours and new strategies. His staff of 30 includes 19 current or former TFA members.

"I have also attracted traditionally trained teachers who have heard about TFA practices and say, 'Hey, I want to be around that mindset,'" he said.

The non-union school uses the Minneapolis district salary scale as a benchmark, plus a performance pay incentive between 10 percent and 20 percent of base salaries, based on teacher evaluations including student test scores and "overall professionalism."

Hiawatha's 400 K-4 students are 95 percent free- or reduced-price lunch eligible, 98 percent students of color and 75 percent have limited English proficiency. The most recent Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment results indicate that 70 percent of Hiawatha students are proficient or advanced in math, as are 68 percent in reading, compared with an range between 10 percent and 30 percent in neighborhood schools with the same percentage of students in poverty.

Those results come from a combination of good hiring, parent involvement and longer hours of 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Hiawatha staff also meets in families' homes to discuss the school's "commitment to excellence."

"It's a promise we will do whatever it takes to get your child to college," Blankenship said. 🙏

HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY 13 - 20, 2011

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select information heard in House committees and other House activities held Jan. 13-20. 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.

Budget

Budget cuts proposed

Republican leaders proposed a package of spending reductions that they say will take an early bite out of the state's projected \$6.2 billion deficit.

House and Senate Republicans introduced a bill Jan. 18 that would reduce more than \$1 billion in state spending in the next biennium. They described it as a first step toward eliminating the deficit. They plan to propose additional reductions after Gov. Mark Dayton releases his budget proposals Feb. 15.

"This is phase one of a process we're going to go through here in the next couple of months," said House Speaker Kurt Zellers (R-Maple Grove).

HF130, sponsored by Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville), would make more than \$840 million in one-time spending reductions permanent. From previous budget projections, these include \$584 million in cuts to tax aids and credits (primarily to local governments); \$185 million to higher education; and \$72 million to various health and human services programs.

The reductions were made in the current biennium as part of a budget deal between DFL lawmakers and former Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Holberg said the bill would merely extend them into the next biennium and beyond.

In addition, the bill would ask Minnesota Management & Budget to identify \$200 million in savings that could be achieved by capturing unspent dollars in agencies' budgets. Holberg said agencies often rush to spend excess money before the end of the biennium in order to justify their funding levels. In a press release, the House Republican Caucus referred to this as the "Christmas in June" effect.

House and Senate DFLers criticized the

proposal as being piecemeal in nature, and said it would cause higher tuition and property taxes for Minnesotans. House Minority Leader Paul Thissen (DFL-Mpls) said the bill broke a promise by Republican leaders.

"If you look at what they said earlier, they were going to focus on protecting kids, people with disabilities and the elderly. They've already broken that promise with this proposal," he said.

Gov. Mark Dayton released a statement indicating he is unlikely to agree to the measure.

"I will not agree to piecemeal cuts and partial solutions," Dayton said. "I will propose a reasonable, balanced and complete budget solution on February 15th, and I ask the legislature to do the same thereafter."

The bill has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. A companion, SF60, sponsored by Sen. Claire Robling (R-Jordan), has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

— N. BUSSE

Smaller state government

The state's government would get a lot smaller if a bill approved by a House committee becomes law.

Sponsored by Rep. Keith Downey (R-Edina), HF4 would require a 15 percent reduction in the size and associated costs of the state's executive branch workforce by 2015.

Members of the House Government Operations and Elections Committee voted to approve the bill Jan. 19 on a split voice vote and referred it to the House State Government Finance Committee.

The bill would establish an early retirement incentive program, and would further authorize layoffs, a hiring freeze and other measures necessary to achieve the reduction. Downey said the bill is less a budget solution than it is an attempt to redesign government services.

"I think most people will look at this as some kind of budget-balancing technique, and frankly the real intent of this bill is to balance government," he said.

Downey presented charts showing that growth in state spending has outpaced combined growth in population and inflation over the last 20 years. He noted that public-



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

As Rep. Keith Downey, sponsor of HF4 listens, Eliot Seide, executive director of AFSCME Council 5, testifies before the House Government Operations and Elections Committee Jan. 19 against a bill that would require a reduction in the state workforce and create an early retirement program.

sector employment in the state grew during the recent recession, even as private-sector employment declined. He said that growth is unsustainable.

"I really think it's time for us to let go of the status quo and the jobs of the past," Downey said.

Some DFL committee members argued he was only presenting half the story.

"I think it's a little disingenuous to say that we're on this unsustainable path," said Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park), who noted that the cost of government compared to personal income had not increased over that time period.

Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL-Mpls) worried the bill could result in the loss of essential workers like law enforcement, emergency services and snowplow drivers.

"I don't think anyone would argue that we have too many snowplow drivers," he said.

Rep. Mike Nelson (DFL-Brooklyn Park) argued lawmakers should address what state

services are going to be cut before they start cutting employees.

"It seems like you've kind of got the cart before the horse," Nelson said. "We're going to have less employees doing more."

A companion, SF81, sponsored by Sen. Ted Daley (R-Eagan), awaits action by the Senate State Government Innovation and Veterans Committee.

— N. BUSSE

Consumers

Green chemistry report presented

Preventing and removing toxic chemicals from children's toys, food utensils and clothing is the subject of a green chemistry report presented Jan. 13 to the House Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee.

The report was authorized by the Legislature last year as part of the Toxic Free Kids Act. Conducted jointly by the Pollution Control Agency and the Department of Health, the two agencies and stakeholders developed a set of recommendations to promote green chemistry in manufacturing practices. They also suggest how to fund implementation of these principles.

Recommendations in the report include:

- requiring manufacturers of children's products that contain a chemical on the state's priority list (to be released Feb. 1, 2011) to file a report;
- directing state agencies to develop educational materials about the risks of exposure to chemicals on the priority list;
- continuing to participate in the Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse; and
- giving preferential purchasing of products that do not contain chemicals on the priority list.

A federal Toxic Substances Control Act, in place since 1976, has failed to provide a comprehensive framework for removing hazardous chemicals during the manufacturing of items for children, who are among the most vulnerable, said Mike Sandusky, director of the PCA Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division.

The last recommendation is to allow the PCA and Health Department to support TSCA reform and to join with California, Maine and Washington in adopting green chemistry policies at the state level that exceed federal requirements.

— S. HEGARTY

Employment

State labor contracts debated

Members of a House committee debated the wisdom and practicality of making changes to state labor contracts at an informational hearing Jan. 19.

The House State Government Finance Committee held an overview of the state's negotiation process with public employee labor unions. Chairman Morrie Lanning (R-Moorhead) said labor agreements are a "big-picture issue" that lawmakers should consider in light of the state's ongoing budget crunch.

"We're not talking about tinkering at all with existing contracts," Lanning said. "What our focus needs to be going forward is what our approach would be to future contracts."

Minnesota Management & Budget Assistant Commissioner Barbara Holmes, as the state's lead labor contract negotiator, said the Legislature typically stays out of labor negotiations. She said laws could be passed that would spell out specifically how MMB should negotiate with the unions, but she said it could have negative consequences.

"The issue for the Legislature to decide is how is it going to give direction without interfering with the agreement process that we have to reach?" Holmes said.

A key issue is public employee salaries. Rep. Mike Benson (R-Rochester) asked whether any data exists on how Minnesota public employees are compensated compared to those in other states.

Holmes replied that Minnesota ranks 20th nationally in average annual public employee salary, but said she isn't aware of any data that takes into account disparities in cost of living and other variables.

Lanning said the process for labor contract negotiations is spelled out in state law, but noted also that legislators have the opportunity to change that law as they see fit. For example, he said the Legislature could pass a salary freeze for all state employees that negotiators on both sides would be bound to accept. He hoped legislators and the governor's staff would communicate with each other about labor agreement expectations during the course of the session.

"I would hate to see us get to the point where the Legislature has one expectation, the governor has another, and we have a stalemate," Lanning said.

— N. BUSSE

Lawmakers eye pension reforms

Some lawmakers are questioning whether the state's public pension funds are expecting too much money from their investments.

Members of the House State Government Finance Committee discussed the issue with pension officials Jan. 18. No action was taken.

Committee Chairman Morrie Lanning (R-Moorhead) said the actuarial value of pension fund assets — i.e. how much money pension funds can realistically earn from their investments — is emerging as a key issue for legislators this year. Some, like Lanning and Rep. Keith Downey (R-Edina), think that the assumed rate of 8.5 percent is unreasonably high, and could result in unfunded liabilities.

"Assumptions on growth in recent years, as well as assumptions about compensation increases, have proven to be inaccurate," Lanning said.

But Howard Bicker, executive director of the State Board of Investment, disagreed. As head of the board responsible for investing the state's public pension funds, Bicker said the state's investments have historically performed higher than the assumed rate of 8.5 percent. In fact, they've seen an actuarial rate of 9.7 percent since 1980. It's only during the recent economic crisis that their values dropped sharply, and Bicker said they've already picked back up again.

"I happen to believe that if we have a long-term policy, both from an investment standpoint and from a pension standpoint, 8 or 8.5 (percent) are very doable," Bicker said.

He argued that investing the state's pensions effectively requires an aggressively managed investment portfolio, which naturally entails short-term volatility. He urged lawmakers not to change the state's investment policy because of short-term economic instability.

"I don't think it's necessary at this stage. I think the markets will recover. I think they've done a good job of recovering at this point," Bicker said.

Lanning disagreed.

"I hope you're right, but I'm not nearly as optimistic as you are," he told Bicker.

Lanning said he's concerned about the size of the current federal budget deficit. He suggested the debt the federal government is carrying could threaten the country's economic stability, potentially causing turmoil in the markets.

"I don't know if we really know what the full impact of that is going to be," Lanning said.

— N. BUSSE

Health & Human Services

Child and community grants cut

Child protection services and services for adults needing mental health assistance could see a funding reduction in the 2012-2013 biennium under a bill approved 11-7 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Jan. 19.

Sponsored by Committee Chairman Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), HF128 would reduce children and community services grants by \$38.5 million, emergency general assistance by \$15.9 million, county child support enforcement administration costs by \$6.7 million, emergency Minnesota supplemental aid by \$2.2 million and adult mental health services for those under State Operated Services by \$1.17 million.

"We are faced with a challenge that's bigger than anybody ever had with less resources to draw on" Abeler said. "This is how we budget sometimes. ... This is a drop in the ocean for the numbers."

Mary Regan, executive director of the Minnesota Council of Child Caring Agencies, said the reductions will directly affect "children, adolescents and adults who experience dependency, abuse, neglect, poverty, disability and chronic health conditions."

The majority of the funds "are spent on child protection to intervene and investigate in allegations of abuse and neglect," she added. There are no other organizations or nonprofits that are able to investigate the 17,218 reports of maltreatment that happened in 2009, she said.

Rep. Mary Kiffmeyer (R-Big Lake) said the bill makes a needed structural change.

When the state has a surplus, increases in certain areas create an expectation. But in the lean years that follow, when money is scarce, a restructuring is required to meet needs, she said.

While the permanent cuts are similar to last special session's budget reductions, there were federal dollars to use as backfill, noted Rep. Larry Hosch (DFL-St. Joseph).

The bill now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee. There is no Senate companion.

— P. OSTBERG

Moving to private insurance

The Healthy Minnesota Contribution Program would move certain MinnesotaCare enrollees to private health care insurance, under a bill approved by the House Health

and Human Services Reform Committee Jan. 19.

Sponsored by Chairman Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud), HF8 would give a state subsidy to low-income adults without children, and if approved by a federal waiver, low-income adults with children, to purchase their own health care insurance. Those with family gross incomes between 133 percent and 275 percent of the federal poverty guidelines would meet the requirement for the subsidy.

A person would pay a monthly contribution based on age and income. For example, a person under age 21 would pay \$122.79, and those 60 years and older would pay \$357.19 monthly, although a sliding fee scale would be established by the health and human services commissioner.

"What we're really trying to do is help Minnesotans afford coverage that they otherwise can't afford," Gottwalt said.

The bill now goes to the House Commerce and Regulatory Reform Committee. Its companion, SF32, sponsored by Sen. David Hann (R-Eden Prairie), awaits action by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Dr. Peter Dehnel, a primary care pediatrician representing the Minnesota Physician-Patient Alliance, said the bill would help put the decision-making into the patient's hands, rather than being denied care because a clinic won't accept

low reimbursements from state health care programs.

Sue Abderholden, executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, said the bill doesn't go far enough in requiring mental health services to be included in an insurance package. "When private insurance doesn't cover mental health care, then it falls back on our public funding ... or more likely our criminal justice system," she said, noting that about 70 percent of young people in the juvenile justice system have one or more mental health diagnosis.

Rep. Diane Loeffler (DFL-Mpls) unsuccessfully offered an amendment that would have required a quality assurance and outcomes measurement system to determine the state's financial return on the change to a private market.

— P. OSTBERG

Sex offender treatment costs

More than 650 individuals are civilly committed in the state's sex offender program at a cost of \$67.4 million in fiscal year 2011.

Although projections show a 50-person increase in each of the next five years, members of the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee asked program officials for cost-saving ideas Jan. 18.

Executive Director Dennis Benson said previous saving measures have included changing sentencing policies to keep



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Dr. Peter Dehnel, representing the Minnesota Physician-Patient Alliance, testifies before the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee Jan. 19 in support of a bill that would establish the Healthy Minnesota Contribution Program. Rep. Steve Gottwalt, sponsor of HF8, listens to the testimony.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Jannine Hébert, executive clinical director of the Minnesota Sex Offender Program, from left, Executive Director Dennis Benson and Deputy Director Dan Storkamp present an overview to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Jan. 18.

offenders in prison longer where the costs are cheaper versus moving them to the more expensive sex offender program.

Another option includes creating consistent criteria among district courts for those who can qualify for the program, said Benson. Currently, each court has a “different spin” on who meets the criteria, he said.

Committee Chairman Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) said the sex offender program is always a “touchy hearing,” but the goal of individuals in the program is working towards rehabilitation.

Benson said therapy is offered to all of those committed but participation can be refused. Currently, about 80 to 85 percent of those committed accept treatment.

Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) asked how many offenders are developmentally disabled and if there was a less costly way to treat that specific group.

Benson said about 20 to 25 percent of patients are lower functioning with an IQ of 70 or less. “Under good supervision they may be managed successfully in a community,” he said, adding further study is needed.

Although no participants have ever been released from the program, Benson predicts a first will happen in the next 12

months. Those results are not unusual with less than 10 percent released nationally, he said. Wisconsin has one the most successful programs, releasing 8-10 individuals per year, he added.

— P. OSTBERG

Waiver programs save state money

The state will save about \$275 million in 2010 by using the Elderly Waiver program instead of shifting people directly to nursing homes for care.

That was the message the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee received Jan. 13 from Todd Bergstrom, director of research and payment for Care Providers of Minnesota.

The program pays for home- and community-based services for people age 65 and older, who are eligible for Medical Assistance, but require medical care at the level of a nursing home and choose to stay in their community. The state currently uses various waiver programs to care for the state’s elderly and disabled to help save on overall costs.

The committee also heard overviews of the state’s long-term care and Medical Assistance funding.

Bob Meyer, director of fiscal analysis continuing care administration for the Department of Human Services, said about 69 percent of long-term care funding is spent on waivers and home care. Meyer described several different waiver programs, including Community Alternative Care that helps those under age 65, many of whom are young adults that need intensive care, such as feeding tubes and hospitalization. Another program includes Personal Care Assistance that helps children and adults with at-home services, such as bathing and toileting.

Committee Chairman Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) said the overviews in the next few meetings are to help members become more informed. “The more we know about the way these programs function, the better,” he said.

Although the committee doesn’t have a budget target, it will be faced with “daunting numbers,” Abeler added. He said he’s still waiting for interested groups to come to the committee with “best practice ways to serve more people,” a request he announced at the committee’s first meeting.

— P. OSTBERG

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Public Safety

Synthetic marijuana penalties gets OK

For about nine months, a 16-year-old boy in the district of Rep. Tara Mack (R-Apple Valley) was using synthetic marijuana unbeknownst to his parents. Because of his “dangerous and very scary behavior,” Mack said, the parents knew something was wrong.

“He had gotten it from some friends; was told it was some sort of a potpourri and was told it wasn’t real dangerous, but ended up having seizures and some severe medical effects because of this,” she said. “It was very disturbing.”

Sponsored by Rep. John Kriesel (R-Cottage Grove), HF57 would make it a gross misdemeanor to sell synthetic marijuana and a misdemeanor to possess the substance.

Approved Jan. 20 by the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee, it next goes to the House Judiciary Policy and Finance Committee. It has no Senate companion.

“Synthetic marijuana, also known as K2 or Spice, is a mix of common herbs sprayed with synthetic chemicals that mimics the effects of marijuana,” Kriesel said. “It is currently being sold in head shops and in stores as incense or potpourri, but is being used as an inhalant for people to get high. ... This product is becoming increasingly popular with teenagers because there is no minimum age to purchase the product and there are hundreds of videos on YouTube demonstrating to teenagers how to get high.”

It has been banned in 17 countries and 11 other states.

Cody Wiberg, executive director of Minnesota Board of Pharmacy, said in the first 11 months of last year there were more than 2,500 calls nationwide to poison control centers because of synthetic marijuana use.

“People who sell these products and make them sometimes like to characterize them as ‘marijuana lite.’ I can assure they are not,” he said, adding there are no medical uses for this.

Lt. Haans Vitek, with the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office Narcotics Unit, said it’s also sold under names Demon, Triple X and Mr. Nice Guy. “Because it is sold as incense and labeled as ‘Not for Human Consumption,’ it has avoided federal laws against marijuana-like products.”

Representatives from the Minnesota



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Lt. Haans Vitek, with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Narcotics Unit, testifies before the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 20 in support of a bill that would criminalize the sale or possession of synthetic marijuana.

Sheriff's Association, Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association and the Minnesota Juvenile Officers Association all spoke in support of the bill. There was no opposition.

— M. COOK

Predatory registration concerns

There are more than 16,000 registered predatory offenders in the state. However, questions have been raised about the costs of keeping a registry that size and how many names should be made widely available.

The state has had predatory offender registration since 1991, with a 93 percent compliance rate, Acting Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Superintendent Dave Bjerga told the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee Jan. 13.

"Of the remaining 7 percent, half of those offenders are outside of the State of Minnesota and are no longer under our jurisdiction," he said.

Bjerga said 120-140 new registrants are added each month; however, Eric Knutson, a special agent in charge, said Jan. 18 that 850-900 people per year are no longer required to register or have completed their registration period.

Currently only information about Level 3 predatory offenders, deemed to be the most likely to re-offend, is available to the public.

Committee Chairman Tony Cornish (R-Good Thunder) said a bill could be coming forward to expand that to lower-level predatory offenders.

Rep. Bill Hilty (DFL-Finlayson) is concerned about costs associated with maintaining an ever-expanding list. "Can you predict what we're ultimately likely to experience in terms of the number of registrants, and what the implications are for keeping track of all of them?"

Bjerga said that is hard to predict because the number of offenses for which a person must register has increased and could further change, meaning more offenders could be required to register.

Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) is also concerned that a larger list will make it harder for citizens to make use of the data. "Part of this was to let the general public be aware," he said. "If there is no selectiveness to it and everybody stays on for life, is there some point at which it becomes impossible for schools and law enforcement, much less the general public, to make use of it the way the intention was."

Other areas addressed during the overview include: forensic science services; investigative services; and administrative services, including the success of the AMBER Alert program.

— M. COOK

State Government

State salary freeze approved

Members of a House committee voted to approve a salary freeze for all state workers Jan. 20.

On a 12-8 party-line vote, members of the House State Government Finance Committee voted to approve HF127. Sponsored by Rep. Denny McNamara (R-Hastings), the bill would freeze state employees' pay beginning July 1, 2011, and lasting indefinitely.

The bill would impact employees in all three branches of state government. It would not prohibit employees who are promoted or transferred to different jobs from accepting increased salaries. A fiscal note from Minnesota Management & Budget estimated its cost savings at \$64 million over the next fiscal biennium.

At a time when many employees in the

private sector have lost jobs or taken pay cuts, McNamara said it's fair to hold public employee wages flat. Moreover, he argued that allowing employees to accept raises at a time when the state is cutting its budget could result in layoffs.

"I would prefer to see as many state employees keep their jobs as possible," McNamara said, adding that he has family members who work in government.

Members disagreed on whether the state should take an active role in determining state workers' pay. Rep. Ryan Winkler (DFL-Golden Valley) called the idea of freezing pay "a perfectly reasonable position," but argued the issue would be better handled through the state's normal labor contract negotiation process.

"I think our job is not to weigh in and give specific guidance like this," Winkler said.

Committee Chairman Morrie Lanning (R-Moorhead) argued that while lawmakers traditionally use a hands-off approach to the collective bargaining process for state employees, it is appropriate for the Legislature to require a pay freeze in a time of deficits.

"It certainly isn't appropriate for us to be micromanaging the negotiation process, but I don't think that's what this bill does," Lanning said.

Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) tried unsuccessfully to amend the bill so that the pay freeze would expire after two years. Lanning said the pay freeze could be lifted legislatively, after the budget situation improves.

The bill now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee. There is no Senate companion.

— N. BUSSE

Spending reduction approved

A House committee approved a plan to hold back \$200 million in state spending, but a state official said it might be difficult to accomplish.

Sponsored by Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), HF125 would ask the state's executive branch to identify more than \$199 million in unspent funds that could be saved in the current fiscal biennium. Another \$764,000 in savings would be required from the Legislature and the state's constitutional offices.

The House State Government Finance Committee approved the bill Jan. 20 on a 12-8 party-line roll call vote. It now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee. There is no Senate companion.

Gunther said the bill might be the easiest

vote legislators will take this year to help balance the budget. He said cutting \$200 million now would give them a head start on dealing with the projected \$6.2 billion deficit in the upcoming biennium, which begins July 1.

"What this basically does is tell the departments of state government that there's not going to be 'Christmas in June,'" Gunther said, referring to an alleged practice of agencies rushing to spend all their unused funds before the fiscal biennium ends on June 30.

"We're not making a decision based on facts," said Rep. Ryan Winkler (DFL-Golden Valley), who went on to call the legislation "cheap theater."

State Auditor Rebecca Otto called the "Christmas in June" notion "offensive," and said her office typically returns most of its state appropriation by collecting fees from its auditing work.

Minnesota Management & Budget Commissioner James Schowalter said the \$199 million figure would account for roughly 20 percent of the money the state has left to spend. With roughly two-thirds of the total unspent money obligated to employee salaries, he said the bill could leave MMB officials with some difficult choices.

"Some of the items that are unobligated at this point include for military affairs, tuition reimbursements, and remaining flood and tornado relief disaster match funding," Schowalter said.

— N. BUSSE

Taxes

Grants for science and tech growth

The first bill to get a hearing in the House Taxes Committee is a continuation of a proposal that got the go-ahead last year.

Sponsored by Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul), HF102 fulfilled a tradition of Committee Chairman Greg Davids (R-Preston) of hearing a bill from the minority party first. No action was taken Jan. 18. It has no Senate companion.

Last year the Legislature established the Minnesota Science and Technology Authority to help create more science and technology jobs to help the state compete against states with similar economic indicators. Mahoney's bill would create a vehicle of support to fund grants and loans for science and technology businesses and for research by Minnesota institutions of higher learning and nonprofit research organizations. Priority would be given

to proposals that promote collaboration with private businesses; attract new research entities, talent or resources; and attract researchers and resources from outside Minnesota.

The bill would establish a dedicated fund with annual revenues of up to \$25 million from growth in Minnesota state income tax withholding on employees from a specified sector of businesses. The grant program would sunset in June 2018.

Mahoney said Minnesota is falling behind when it comes to jobs in the science and technology sector.

"This isn't just state versus state. We are competing with other countries," he said. "Frankly in our peer states, we are at the lower end of the tier in terms of investing in our own economy. We all believe that we are a huge medical-based and science-based economy. Our job growth was 1.2 percent below what it was in previous years, while the average growth in our peer states was 2 percent. ... We can't sustain that for very long before we are not a player."

— L. SCHUTZ

LGA cut clears first committee

A move to put on the fast track a bill that would make last year's reductions to local government aid permanent has minority members of the House Taxes Committee questioning why so fast.

Part of a package of reductions announced Jan. 18 by House and Senate Republican leaders that would reduce the projected state \$6.2 billion state budget deficit by \$1 billion, HF129 would:

- make permanent all pay-2010 aid and credit reductions to local government;
- reduce the renter's tax credit from 19 percent to 15 percent;
- repeal the political contribution refunds; and
- limit payments to claimants under the sustainable forests incentive program.

"My goal here is to make the numbers look better in the February forecast," said Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), the bill's sponsor and committee chairman.

Approved 11-7 by the committee, the bill's next stop is the House Ways and Means Committee. A companion, SF82, sponsored by Sen. Claire Robling (R-Jordan), awaits action by the Senate Taxes Committee.

The bill proposes to make permanent the \$304 million reduction to fiscal year 2011 local government aid that was part of the 2010 budget-balancing legislation. However, the same legislation, which has been certified



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Gary Carlson, standing left, intergovernmental relations director for the League of Minnesota Cities, and Patricia Nauman, executive director of Metro Cities, wait to testify before the House Taxes Committee Jan. 19 about the "Phase I Budget Proposal" that would reduce tax aids and credits and payments to cities.

for fiscal year 2012 would bring the aid level back up to \$928 million. The freeze at the \$690 million level, some say, will result in massive budget cuts for cities and counties and higher property taxes.

Because the session is only in its third week, Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth) said there is time to consider other options. He recommends looking at ways to improve efficiencies, redesign how government works, zero-based budgeting and listening to the public before proposing more tax increases. A motion to refer the bill to the House Property and Local Tax Division was defeated.

There's big difference between short-term and permanent cuts, said Rep. Jim Davnie (DFL-Mpls). He said cities set their levies for the fiscal year assuming the money this bill would cut would be restored.

"One Legislature cannot bind another Legislature to action," countered Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan). "The 86th Legislature made some really bad budget decisions. Promises were made by a Legislature that no longer exists."

— L. SCHUTZ

Tax savings part of conformity bill

The recently enacted federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act allows the cost of health insurance coverage of dependents and adult children to age 26 to be excluded from federal taxable income.

While hoping to conform the state to the exclusion, Republican members of the House Taxes Committee cautioned Jan. 18 that their support of HF79 should not be viewed as an endorsement of the controversial new federal law.

The bill would, for tax year 2010 only, allow Minnesotans a similar exclusion on state taxes. The bill was amended so that employers who have prepared and distributed W-2 forms are not required to create new ones. There would be a \$200,000 cost to the state's General Fund in fiscal year 2011 to provide for the tax break.

"My motivation is simply dollars; it is something we can do quickly and make life better for a lot of folks," said Committee Chairman Greg Davids (R-Preston), the bill's sponsor. He called the measure "technical," and that quick action was needed because it would affect W-2 forms that by law must be distributed to employees by Jan. 31.

There was concern that a vote to approve the measure would be viewed as an endorsement of the new federal reform.

"We are strictly on the mechanical processes of filling out our W-2s, and not on whether to adopt any provision of the federal health care act?" asked Rep. Keith Downey (R-Edina).

Davids tried to reassure him that this was a vote to only conform to current federal law and to lower taxes. But Downey said approving this tax conformity is "actually one of the first steps to adopting more completely and fully the federal health care reform."

Although, Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington), who headed the committee the previous two biennia, called the vote a support of health care reform, she said the committee should set aside its political differences for the good of state residents. "These provisions are tax cuts for Minnesotans."

The bill awaits action by the House Ways and Means Committee. Its companion, SF47, sponsored by Sen. Julianne Ortman (R-Chanhassen), awaits action by the Senate Taxes Committee.

— L. SCHUTZ

COLORFUL LISTENER

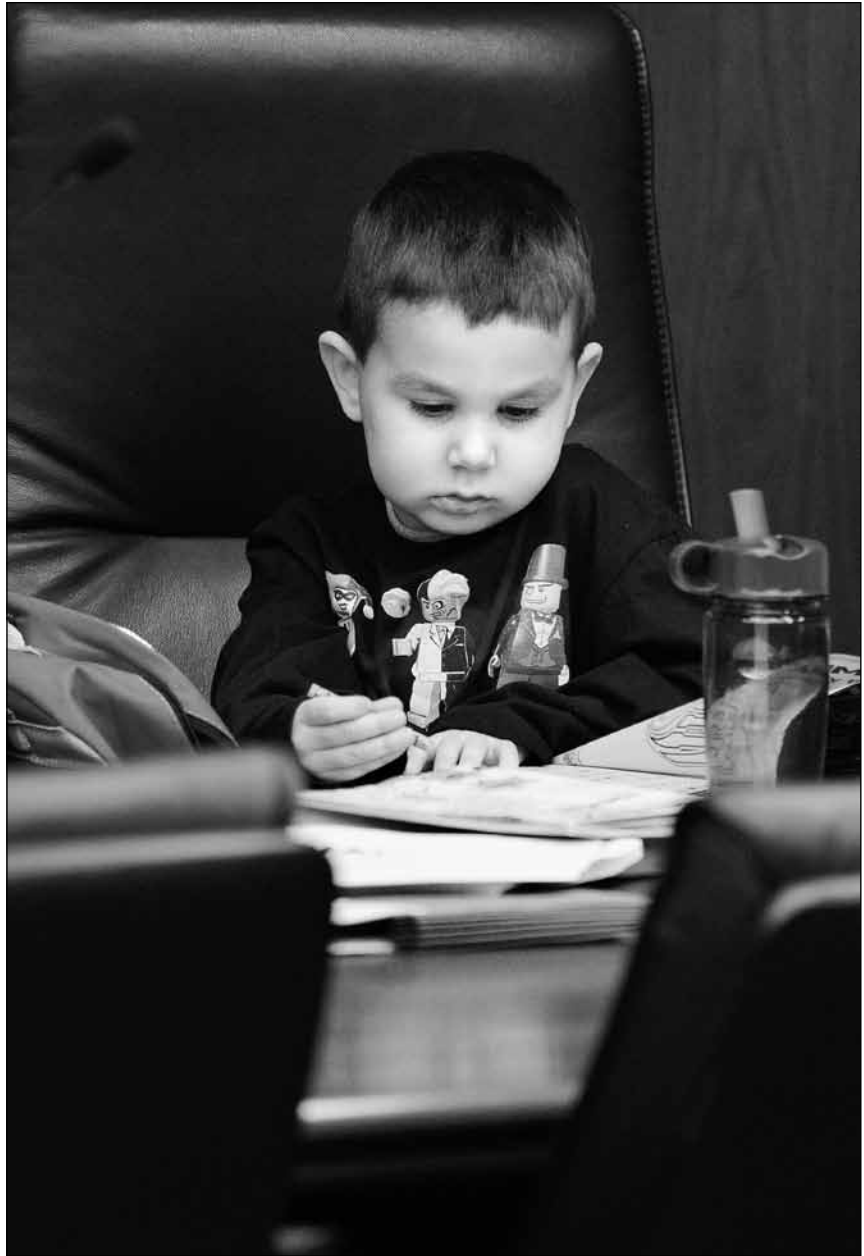


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Three-year-old Kahllin Franson passes the time with a coloring book during the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Jan. 18. Kahllin is the son of Rep. Mary Franson, a committee member.

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A push here, a bubble there

State redistricting is a balancing act that's not often easy

BY LEE ANN SCHUTZ

Some members live so perilously close to the adjoining House district that, in 2012, they may find themselves running for election against another seated member.

That's the nature of redistricting — the every 10-year process of slicing and dicing the state into equal districts by population to ensure that all citizens have a voice in the lawmaking process.

Some have called it the highest stakes political game the

Legislature can play; it involves math and partisan politics. Using history as an indicator, it can be an emotionally charged process that in the recent past has only been resolved by the courts.

The state is currently divided into eight congressional districts; 67 Senate districts and 134 House districts. But after every census the movement of residents, especially from rural to urban areas, alters the state's district border lines. Ten years ago, the average House district contained about 36,000 people.

Population estimates in 2009 indicate Rep. Andrew Falk (DFL-Murdock) has just 33,093 constituents, while four representatives have more than 50,000 constituents, topped by the 57,836 residents in the district of Rep. Mike Beard (R-Shakopee).

Minnesota recently learned that although its population growth has slowed, it will retain its eight congressional seats, but where those district lines will fall is yet to be determined. It depends upon where people have migrated from and to, and where and who is deciding on the lines.

State Demographer Tom Gillaspay told the House Redistricting Committee Jan. 18 that 2010 census figures show some

Minnesota counties — mostly in the western and southwestern parts of the state — are among the nation's highest when it comes to experiencing sharp and, most likely, permanent declines.

But Minnesota also has some of the fastest growing counties in the nation — Scott, Carver, Wright, Sherburne, Chisago and Isanti counties — all within about 60 miles of Minneapolis.

Gillaspay said the redistricting process can be compared to squeezing a balloon — a push in one direction changes the configuration somewhere else.

As goes the population, there also goes the representation. This squeeze of people leaving the far corners of the state expands the population representation in the urban areas — but not equally. While some suburbs have grown, some parts of the metro area have lost population.

"Within the Twin Cities is a cluster (of districts) that are smaller, indicating that they may need to be expanded in size, but they are surrounded by districts that are larger than the equal population size," Gillaspay said.

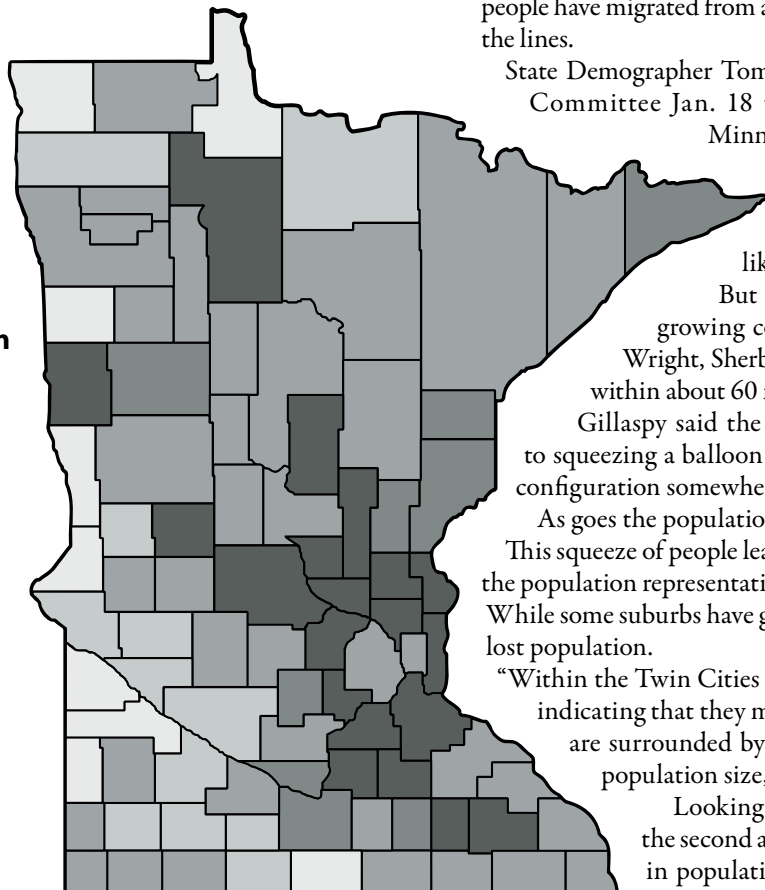
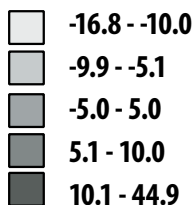
Looking to the congressional divide, Gillaspay said the second and sixth districts are substantially larger in population size, while the seventh, fifth, fourth and first have lower population numbers. So, expect changes there as well.

Minnesota Population Changes 2000-2009

(CENSUS BUREAU ESTIMATES)

Data Classes

Percent



Source: Minnesota Department of Administration

The process begins

Redistricting begins when the state receives the census data.

According to 2010 census figures received in December, Minnesota added 348,446 people for an increase of 7.8 percent from 2000. This brings our population total to 5,303,925.

It comes as no surprise that the Sun Belt states gained substantial population. For example, Texas added 4.3 million residents — and four Congressional seats. If the shift had been any greater away from Minnesota, we most likely would have lost a congressional seat.

The House has appointed a redistricting committee chaired by Rep. Sarah Anderson (R-Plymouth), which will ultimately be the first point of contact for a redistricting bill. One perk of being in the majority is the control that party has over the process of drawing new state and congressional lines. Republicans held the reins in 2001 and the DFL in 1991.

The 2011 redistricting process began with a December 2009 meeting of the Subcommittee on Redistricting. Consisting of two members each from the House and Senate, they are responsible for assisting the Legislature in carrying out the responsibility.

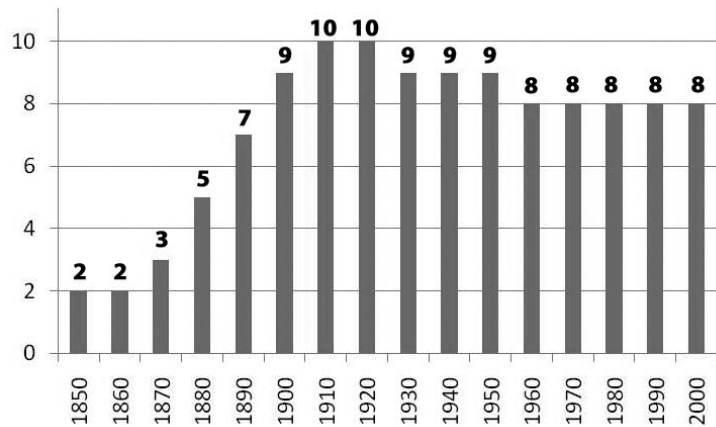
By March the state will receive a detailed count of population, and then the process of redrawing the lines begins in earnest, with Feb. 21, 2012, — 25 weeks before the primary — being the deadline for a bill to the governor.

Messy outcomes

In 1991, 24 pairs of House members ended up in the same district — seven in Greater Minnesota and five in the metro area.

In 2001-2002, 10 different Congressional redistricting plans and 11 different legislative redistricting plans were submitted, said nonpartisan House Research Analyst Matt Gehring. The process yielded one bill that

Minnesota Congressional Apportionment History



Source: Minnesota Department of Administration

2011-2012 Redistricting Time Line

- Dec. 21, 2010: Minnesota notified of total state population and Congressional apportionment
- Feb. 21, 2012: New congressional and legislative districts must be in place (25 weeks before the state primary)
- April/May 2012: Deadlines for completion of local redistricting
- Aug. 14, 2012: State Primary
- Nov. 6, 2012: State General Election

failed in conference committee, and a set of plans was then submitted by the governor's advisory commission. The Legislature adjusted boundaries affecting four House districts.

The redistricting process will culminate with an election of the full Legislature. Senate seats are usually a four-year term, except after redistricting.

The law allows for court intervention if the Legislature and the governor can't agree on a plan, or if someone chooses to challenge the results — and our history is long on court invention.

If the process gets messy, past decisions can come back to haunt new plans.

According to Gehring, the state's first

redistricting took place in 1960, and once the boundaries were drawn, Minnesotans filed a suit in federal court alleging that the boundaries of 1913, used in the process, violated the 14th amendment.

During the 2000 redistricting, plaintiffs asked that the three-judge panel's decision of the 1990 redistricting plan be reopened and that the districts declared unconstitutional. The motion was granted and in July 2001, a five-judge panel was appointed to resolve the issue. In March 2002, new legislative and congressional district boundaries were set.

For more information on redistricting, go to: www.gis.leg.mn/html/redistricting.html



Minnesota's U.S. Representatives in Washington, D.C.

First District Tim Walz (DFL)

1722 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2472
Fax: 202-225-3433

Second District John Kline (R)

2439 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2271
Fax: 202-225-2595

Third District Erik Paulsen (R)

127 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2871
Fax: 202-225-6351

Fourth District Betty McCollum (DFL)

1714 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-6631
Fax: 202-225-1968

Fifth District Keith Ellison (DFL)

1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-4755
Fax: 202-225-4886

Sixth District Michele Bachmann (R)

103 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2331
Fax: 202-225-6475

Seventh District Collin Peterson (DFL)

2211 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2165
Fax: 202-225-1593

Eighth District Chip Cravaack (R)

508 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-6211
Fax: 202-225-0699

Professor turned legislator

Banaian goes from the classroom to the House

By **PATTY OSTBERG**

Rep. King Banaian (R-St. Cloud) won his election by just 10 votes. It was a race he wasn't sure he wanted to be a part of until the past few years.



Rep. King Banaian

"I was not one of those people that wanted to be involved in politics all along," he said. "I'm a tenured full professor. I have a nice quiet life. I have an office that is so peaceful. ... I ran because I thought I could help do something with budgeting. I feel that's the No. 1 issue."

That only seems natural for Banaian, an economics professor for more than 25 years.

"Economics is always about presenting alternatives. What's new for me is I was always

the person who presented the alternatives, but it was always someone else who had to choose."

In 2002, he started a blog that was initially to be about higher education and then "delted into politics." While hosting a conservative radio show for six years Banaian thought he might make a good legislator.

Banaian ran his campaign on the premise that his first bill would address the state's budget process. He sponsors HF2, which would require state agencies and the Legislature to implement zero-based budgeting. It will help agencies identify activities they shouldn't be doing, and by zeroing them out, "you can make some gains pretty quickly," Banaian said.

A basic principle used by some personal finance coaches supports his belief that the

DISTRICT 15B
Population (2009 est.): 36,573
Largest City: St. Cloud
Counties: Benton, Stearns, Sherburne
Top Concern: The budget process

state budget can be balanced without a tax increase. "You have an envelope and put dollars into that envelope and when you are out of dollars, that's it," he said.

Other issues that are important to his district include transportation, especially roads and a local airport that lacks commercial service; bonding projects; development of a main street; and declining enrollment in the school district.

Banaian said he will maintain focus on the job at hand and make sure his "ego is buried... It's an honor to be here, nobody owes you that chair. You owe a lot to everybody else that got you to that chair."

Numbers guy

Barrett hopes to help bring fiscal management to Capitol

By **SUE HEGARTY**

Rep. Bob Barrett (R-Shafer) has always been a numbers guy. It's just the way his mind works.



Rep. Bob Barrett

He's the one balancing the books at home, as treasurer at church and on the job as executive director of the Hazelden Foundation.

"I want to find truth. And that's not fun, but that's what really gets me excited," Barrett said.

"I'm cheap," he added.

His penchant for saving money led to meeting his wife, Judi. While attending Minnesota State University, Mankato, she was trying to decide what to order at a local

restaurant. She caught his eye and he said, "You should buy this beer because you get to keep the cup, and the next time you order, the beer is cheaper. It's more economical."

That kind of fiscal management is what's needed at the Legislature because the state has built an unsustainable system of entitlement, he said. "There are too many workers in the cart and too few pulling."

Reform must be part of the solution, he said. Serving on the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee and the House Education Reform Committee, he'd like to help make that happen. He also sits on the House Property and Local Tax Division.

He hopes to help strengthen out the economy in his district. "The businesses are dropping like flies because of high taxes and

DISTRICT 17B
Population (2009 est.): 45,460
Largest City: North Branch
County: Chisago
Top Concerns: A strong business climate and financial responsibility

other priorities the state is making right now," he said.

Balancing the state budget, another goal, is an additional way Barrett feels he can contribute his talents.

"We've created a system we can't afford," he said. A self-proclaimed conservative, Barrett said he shared Tea Party values even before there was a Tea Party.

When he's not crunching numbers at home, church, on the job or in committee, Barrett enjoys going for walks with his wife, two daughters and their 140-pound Newfoundland dog, Tigger.

'Make a difference'

Greene considers herself a person who can unite others

By PATTY OSTBERG

"Where are you from?" seems like a simple question to answer for most people. But, for Rep. Marion Greene (DFL-Mpls) it is an explanation, not just the naming of a city.



Rep. Marion Greene

She grew up outside the United States with parents who served in the U.S. Foreign Service. The upbringing helped formulate her ideas on the "desire to make a difference" and how to participate in government and civic life.

Since moving to her current residence a decade ago, Greene has been involved in various political issues and the DFL Party. She's been particularly interested in neighborhood issues and the development of the Uptown area in Minneapolis.

Before transplanting to the state, Greene worked in Washington, D.C. for the Clinton-Gore campaign and various nonprofits, such as the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

Through these experiences, Greene discovered she wanted to be in service-oriented work.

A good friend urged a legislative run. "I like problem solving, I like bringing people together from different points of view and finding the best way forward that serves as many people as possible."

She said a balanced approach to the state's budget problems is important to the people of her district. "We can balance the state budget, but we can also protect investment in education, health care — things that my district views as long-term investments." She said this approach would ultimately grow the tax base and economy.

DISTRICT 60A

Population (2009 est.): 37,055
Largest City: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
Top Concern: The budget

Greene believes the state will need to trim in certain areas, but it will also need new sources of revenue to solve the budget deficit. "We can call them fees or taxes; it's still going to be coming out of the pockets of Minnesotans."

Other issues important to her constituents include marriage equality and bullying in schools, she said.

Because she serves in the minority, Greene realizes that any bills she sponsors won't likely be heard. "... I'm going to continue to push on issues." She said she'll try to find subjects that are important to her district and more conservative districts to find common solutions.

Priorities based on data

Gruenhagen doesn't favor across-the-board cuts

By LEE ANN SCHUTZ

Whether in the House or in his home district, Rep. Glenn Gruenhagen (R-Glencoe) loves a good debate on the issues — especially about government spending and what he calls its intrusiveness into the private sector.



Rep. Glenn Gruenhagen

"Government tends to have a corruptive influence; wherever government money shows up, in general, the price of everything goes up," said Gruenhagen, who has his own insurance agency.

He acknowledged that human nature plays a part with companies taking advantage of the funds. "When you show up with the money ... everyone is sitting around trying to figure out how to increase their prices,

the costs go up," he said. "I don't care if it is a farmer, contractor or stadium builder."

Gruenhagen said his approach to the state's deficit is not indiscriminate cutting. He said there is a need for comparative data — "how we compare with other states" — to help with setting priorities — otherwise, it's like walking through a china shop while wildly swinging a baseball bat. "You don't know that once you start swinging what you'll wreck," and it may be something you would prefer left untouched.

"Comparative data gives you the tools to make the changes and bring the budget into compliance with the ability of the private sector and the taxpayers to support it," he said.

While passionate in his talk about state spending, Gruenhagen is even more passionate, albeit in a quieter tone, about his family and his values. Married for 32 years, with three children and four grandchildren, his mission is "to build a better future economically and culturally for our children

DISTRICT 25A

Population (2009 est.): 40,775
Largest City: New Prague
Counties: Le Sueur, Scott, Sibley
Top Concerns: Improve business climate, streamlining regulations, education

and grandchildren; have communities where they feel safe; (provide) good educational options and institutions; and a good strong religious fabric. Some of this stuff does better without government interference."

Gruenhagen is active in his church and enjoys ballroom dancing with his wife, Emily. "I'm good enough to get by on the floor," he said.

After 16 years on the Glencoe-Silver Lake School Board, Gruenhagen resigned his seat before taking his oath in the House. He now serves on the Civil Law, Health and Human Services Reform, Judiciary Policy and Finance, and the Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance committees.

Firsthand information

LeMieur brings his business background to the Capitol

By Mike Cook

Rep. Mike LeMieur (R-Little Falls) has seen firsthand what a bad business climate can do to a smaller community.



Rep. Mike LeMieur

A lifelong resident of Little Falls, he's seen a pair of large boat manufacturers close up shop in his hometown. One has since reopened to a lesser degree.

"It affects all other businesses," said LeMieur, who, with

his three brothers, owns a plumbing and heating company that their father began 55 years earlier.

"I see that people are hurting and that they don't have the extra money to spend on, for example, replacing their furnace when it

should be replaced. Instead, they just need it to limp along because they don't have the money they normally would have or they're worried about not having a job," LeMieur said.

How does that turn around?

"We're rated one of the worst states for being a business-friendly state, yet we have the greatest workforce," he said. "I truly believe if we can create a business-friendly state, and combine that with our workforce, we will have a recipe for success and we will grow jobs. When you grow jobs you grow revenues." He lists reducing business tax rates and streamlining the permitting process as two ways of growing business.

With the varied makeup of his Central Minnesota district, LeMieur is pleased to serve on two distinct committees — House Agriculture and Rural Development Policy

DISTRICT 12B

Population (2009 est.): 39,452

Largest City: Little Falls

Counties: Crow Wing, Morrison

Top Concern: Jobs

and Finance, and House Jobs and Economic Development Finance — along with the House Property and Local Tax and House Veterans Services divisions.

"My district has a lot of agriculture, Camp Ripley is in the center of my district. I thought my business background would help on jobs and economic development and I think property taxes are an issue," he said. "I think my property taxes are high for the home I live in."

A husband and father of three sons, LeMieur likes to hunt and fish. He also has spent 20 years on the Little Falls Fire Department.

A brighter future

Mazorol plans to focus on budget, business

By Nick Busse

When Rep. Pat Mazorol (R-Bloomington) won his election in November, it was a bittersweet victory. Roughly a week earlier, he learned that his father had been diagnosed with stage-four cancer. Two days after the election, he died.



Rep. Pat Mazorol

Mazorol, who had planned to visit his parents in New Orleans the weekend after the election, didn't get to

visit his father in time. But he did get to share the good news about his election with him over the phone.

"He knew about it, long distance. I was able to tell him ... so that was nice," he said.

Mazorol's arrival at the Legislature was a long time in coming. He made an unsuccessful bid for a Senate seat in 1982, and didn't run for public office again for 28 years. He led a successful career as a lawyer and a financial advisor, and last year he began a new job as senior vice president for university relations at Bethel University.

It's his position at Bethel, being around the state's "future leaders," that motivates him as a public servant, Mazorol said.

"I just think the next generation deserves to have a life as good or better than I've been able to enjoy," he said.

Mazorol worries that his daughters' generation will end up footing the bill for irresponsible fiscal policies. He's also concerned that the state's regulatory environment serves as a deterrent to

businesses, holding back job growth.

"We've got a terribly attractive state to live in, and I think people would like to live here," he said. "I think we just need to make sure we aren't doing other things to keep businesses away."

Mazorol, who spent much of his career in a "very regulated industry" (banking), said he hopes to bring his experience to bear in making the state a more appealing home to companies. He believes the future of the state depends on it.

"We can't be non-competitive and expect that we'll continue to have jobs for Minnesotans," he said.

DISTRICT 41B

Population (2009 est.): 36,831

Largest City: Bloomington

County: Hennepin

Top Concern: Fiscal discipline

Snapshot of Delano leader

McDonald follows in his father's footsteps

By SUE HEGARTY

Six years ago, Joe McDonald found himself across the table from former Rep. Tom Emmer in Delano. Emmer agreed not to run for the Legislature if McDonald did, according to McDonald. He decided it wasn't his time yet, so he told Emmer, "In six years you better get done what you want because I'm running."



Rep. Joe McDonald

He did and he won. That was against his father's wishes.

McDonald's dad, K.J., served 14 years in the House from 1977-1990 and advised him not to run for office. "He said if you want to ruin your business and your family, run for office. So he wasn't the first

person I called, but he's proud and very supportive."

The younger McDonald has been a Republican Party activist for 13 years. He's moved through the ranks of Delano leadership from president of the chamber of commerce to mayor of the city, where he owns a photography studio with his wife, Rachel. A master photographer, McDonald has photographed many of his constituents.

"It's a great career knowing the art I produce will outlive me and give years of pleasure to the families," he said.

Time will tell whether the legislation he produces gives him that same satisfaction. McDonald serves on the House Health and Human Services Finance and Reform committees, the House Property and Local Tax Division and the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance

DISTRICT 19B

Population (2009 est.): 56,487
Largest City: St. Michael
Counties: Hennepin, Wright
Top Concern: Help reduce unnecessary spending

Committee.

He's particularly sensitive to the needs of local government. Cuts in state aid and statutory limits on how much cities can levy tie the hands of local government, he said. "I just don't believe that the state has any business capping the levy for communities."

When he's not representing Wright County, McDonald said he can be found at work in the community and participating in the many groups he belongs to, when time permits. After all, he has to save time to jump on the trampoline with his three sons and to challenge them to a Wii game.

Myhra goes from home to House

Dedicated door-knocking key to election success

By KRIS BERGGREN

"High-octane" is how Rep. Pam Myhra (R-Burnsville) describes herself. She's a certified public accountant, Republican Party activist since 1994 and a mother of three whom she home-schooled from preschool through 12th grade.



Rep. Pam Myhra

During her campaign for the House, she personally knocked on about 12,000 doors, taking three or four shifts a day. Her children offered social media advice, door-knocking company and help with household chores. Her husband also lent his full support.

"I have always been a person who has given 110 percent," Myhra said. She believes that level of dedication was a reason she was elected.

"People realized I wanted the job and

once I had it, I would work really hard for them," she said, adding that one voter told her he didn't want to know what party she represented, but that he'd vote for her because she came to his home.

Ironically, door-knocking was the one aspect of grassroots politics she'd previously avoided.

"I thought it was a little intimidating," Myhra said. "It turned out I really loved it."

She also learned from it.

"I was stunned how many homes were vacant in a whole variety of neighborhoods," Myhra said, evidence of the foreclosure crisis.

That drove home what she heard from voters who, she said, are hurting from wage freezes or job losses. Her own family experienced a downturn in income in 2009. "We had to go through our budget and reset priorities, and I feel state government should do the same," she said.

Besides education, which is her passion,

DISTRICT 40A

Population (2009 est.): 37,729
Largest City: Burnsville
Counties: Dakota, Scott
Top Concerns: Education, responsible government, protecting family income

her priorities include economic development, reducing taxes and paring government spending within its means. She said there is a difference between what's essential or important, and what's nice. Protecting nursing homes and care of vulnerable adults is an example of what's essential. A new stadium? Merely nice.

"I just love the Vikings," she said, "but building a stadium now would be like laying linoleum in the kitchen while the bedroom is on fire."

A new way to serve

O'Driscoll continues a long record of public service

By Nick Busse

Rep. Tim O'Driscoll (R-Sartell) was born into a family of public servants. His father, the Sartell police chief when O'Driscoll



Rep. Tim O'Driscoll

was growing up, taught him and his brothers the importance of civic duty.

"He really instilled in us a sense of commitment and community involvement, and continuing to make the community successful," O'Driscoll said.

The way O'Driscoll chose to do that was to get involved in local government. He spent six years on the Sartell City Council, followed by four years as the mayor. He

has also been actively involved in veterans support programs like Beyond the Yellow Ribbon and the Central Minnesota Warrior to Citizen Initiative.

O'Driscoll's service in the House will be an extension of not only his previous public service, but of his private life as well.

As a corporate trainer, O'Driscoll helps people prepare for careers in real estate and insurance. As a lawmaker, he hopes to grow the state's business community in other ways.

"I plan on continuing to work on building a fair jobs base ... so that employers feel comfortable making an investment and getting out there with jobs," he said.

O'Driscoll's district has a mix of urban and rural areas. One of his top priorities is keeping agriculture a viable industry in the state. He'd also like to see some reforms

DISTRICT 14A
Population (2009 est.): 46,912
Largest City: Sauk Rapids
Counties: Benton, Stearns
Top Concerns: Jobs, the budget, agriculture

relating to agriculture policy — specifically, a rollback of the Green Acres law.

O'Driscoll cites three criteria for a successful legislative session: a balanced budget without raising taxes; new policies to promote job growth in the state; and growth in the economy. He hopes that the Legislature will enact reforms this year that will make future legislative sessions easier.

"We will have built an opportunity for when we come back next session to be able to take advantage of the growth — if you will, the seeds that we've planted this session," he said.

A fast learner

Petersen says state should practice 'kitchen table budgeting'

By Kris Berggren

Rep. Branden Petersen (R-Andover) was something of a dark horse candidate: he's young, lacks a postsecondary degree and had never run for elected office. Even after his late entry into the race, he beat a seasoned city official for the Republican endorsement, and he learned fast how to win again.



Rep. Branden Petersen

"I outworked her, called every delegate, went to every precinct caucus," said Petersen, who beat DFL incumbent Rep. Jerry Newton on Election Day.

Petersen has lived in his district since the age of 8, playing Little League and attending Coon Rapids High School. He married his

high school sweetheart, Jessica. His parents live close by, as does his wife's family.

"It's very much my community. This is my hometown," Petersen said.

Petersen said that not completing college was a financial decision. "I had to pay for my own school. That's how the cookie crumbles," he said. Instead, he worked his way up the ladder at Lowe's, the home improvement company, and became an area sales manager.

Less than a year ago, he and Jessica married, bought a home, moved in and now are expecting a baby. Meanwhile, Petersen spent months commuting to work an hour and 40 minutes each way between Andover and Mankato. He took a reduced-capacity position at a store closer to home to make time for campaign activities.

Making ends meet is also the reality for his constituents. Petersen thinks the state should take note of their "kitchen table budgeting."

DISTRICT 49B
Population (2009 est.): 37,893
Largest City: Coon Rapids
County: Anoka
Top Concerns: Equity in education funding, mandate reduction, zero-based state budgeting

"Lots of people pointed out that, in the last two or three years, they're making the same or less, but the state keeps giving cost-of-living increases," Petersen said. "They pointed out the hypocrisy there, especially when they're paying for state government."

Other priorities include funding equity for schools that have high needs but not the revenue to match, and "value-added" teacher evaluations measuring effectiveness by students' yearly progress, not only their proficiency. He also wants mandate reductions to cities and counties to soften the blow of state cuts to local government aid that he said seem likely.

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	Dauids, Greg (R)	585	9278	65A	Moran, Rena (DFL)	227	5158
62A	Davnie, Jim (DFL)	215	0173	23A	Morrow, Terry (DFL)	211	8634
52B	Dean, Matt (R)	459	3018	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262
52A	Dettmer, Bob (R)	473	4124	10B	Murdock, Mark (R)	593	4293
6A	Dill, David (DFL)	273	2190	64A	Murphy, Erin (DFL)	345	8799
47A	Dittrich, Denise (DFL)	311	5513	6B	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	343	2676
33B	Doepke, Connie (R)	579	4315	27A	Murray, Rich (R)	439	8216
41A	Downey, Keith (R)	407	4363	40A	Myhra, Pam (R)	517	4212
28B	Draskowski, Steve (R)	401	2273	46A	Nelson, Michael V. (DFL)	229	3751
2A	Eken, Kent (DFL)	243	9918	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946
16A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	509	6746	29B	Norton, Kim (DFL)	233	9249
1A	Fabian, Dan (R)	431	9635	14A	O'Driscoll, Tim (R)	369	7808
20A	Falk, Andrew (DFL)	239	4228	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	301	4199
11B	Franson, Mary (R)	429	3201	31A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637
26B	Fritz, Patti (DFL)	253	8237	32A	Peppin, Joyce (R)	503	7806
36B	Garofalo, Pat (R)	537	1069	4A	Persell, John (DFL)	223	5516
7B	Gauthier, Kerry (DFL)	225	4246	49B	Petersen, Branden (R)	577	5369
15A	Gottwalt, Steve (R)	485	6316	45A	Peterson, Sandra (DFL)	337	4176
60A	Greene, Marion (DFL)	331	0171	27B	Poppe, Jeanne (DFL)	291	4193
54A	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	393	5387	29A	Quam, Duane (R)	569	9236
25A	Gruenhagen, Glenn (R)	575	4229	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	303	0170
24A	Gunther, Bob (R)	591	3240	53A	Runbeck, Linda (R)	583	2907
48A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	409	2439	51A	Sanders, Tim (R)	449	4226
22B	Hamilton, Rod (R)	559	5373	54B	Scalze, Bev (DFL)	259	7153
2B	Hancock, David (R)	529	4265	22A	Schomacker, Joe (R)	433	5505
39A	Hansen, Rick (DFL)	247	6828	49A	Scott, Peggy (R)	477	4231
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	255	3824	18A	Shimanski, Ron (R)	367	1534
61B	Hayden, Jeff (DFL)	389	7152	44A	Simon, Steve (DFL)	279	9889
46B	Hilstrom, Debra (DFL)	261	3709	55B	Slawik, Nora (DFL)	245	7807
8A	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	207	4308	63B	Slocum, Linda (DFL)	359	7158
36A	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	453	6926	33A	Smith, Steve (R)	543	9188
34B	Hoppe, Joe (R)	563	5066	42A	Stensrud, Kirk (R)	553	3964
60B	Hornstein, Frank (DFL)	213	9281	21A	Swedzinski, Chris (R)	527	5374
47B	Hortman, Melissa (DFL)	377	4280	63A	Thissen, Paul (DFL)	267	5375
14B	Hosch, Larry (DFL)	349	4373	51B	Tillberry, Tom (DFL)	231	5510
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	491	2451	21B	Torkelson, Paul (R)	371	9303
7A	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228	18B	Urdahl, Dean (R)	571	4344
67B	Johnson, Sheldon (DFL)	217	4201	13B	Vogel, Bruce (R)	507	6206
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	353	4257	62B	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	251	4200
26A	Kath, Kory (DFL)	201	5368	12A	Ward, John (DFL)	221	4333
28A	Kelly, Tim (R)	565	8635	38B	Wardlow, Doug (R)	551	4128
56B	Kieffer, Andrea (R)	531	1147	11A	Westrom, Torrey (R)	443	4929
1B	Kiel, Debra (R)	423	5091	44B	Winkler, Ryan (DFL)	321	7026
16B	Kiffmeyer, Mary (R)	501	4237	25B	Woodard, Kelby (R)	539	7065
50B	Knuth, Kate (DFL)	323	0141	32B	Zellers, Kurt (R)	463	5502
20B	Koenen, Lyle (DFL)	241	4346	5B	Open seat, special election Feb. 15, 2011		0172

How a Bill Becomes

Idea

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

Legal form

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

Sponsors

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

General Register

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

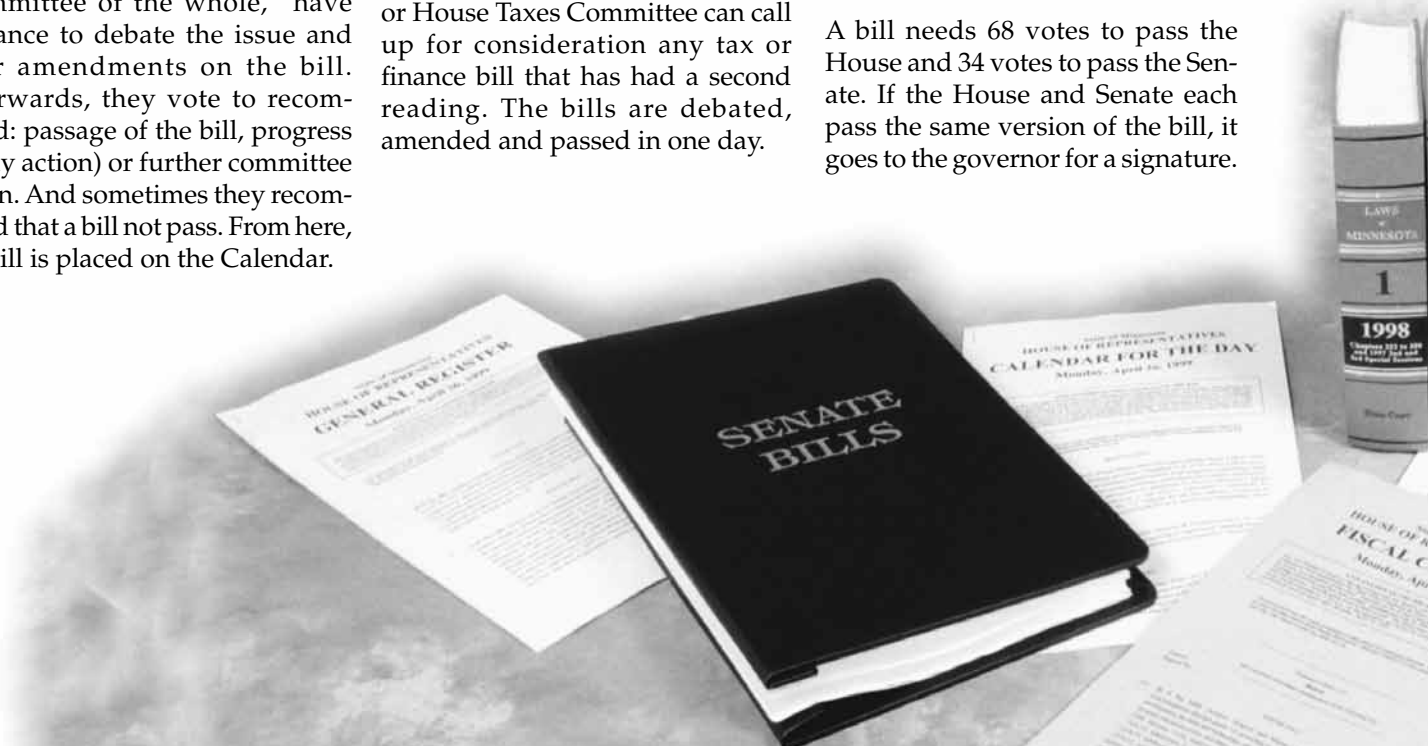
In the Senate, a different procedure is used. Bills are listed on the General Orders agenda. Senate members, acting as the "committee of the whole," have a chance to debate the issue and offer amendments on the bill. Afterwards, they vote to recommend: passage of the bill, progress (delay action) or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

Calendar for the Day

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

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

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



a Law in Minnesota

Introduction

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

Committee

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

Floor

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

Conference

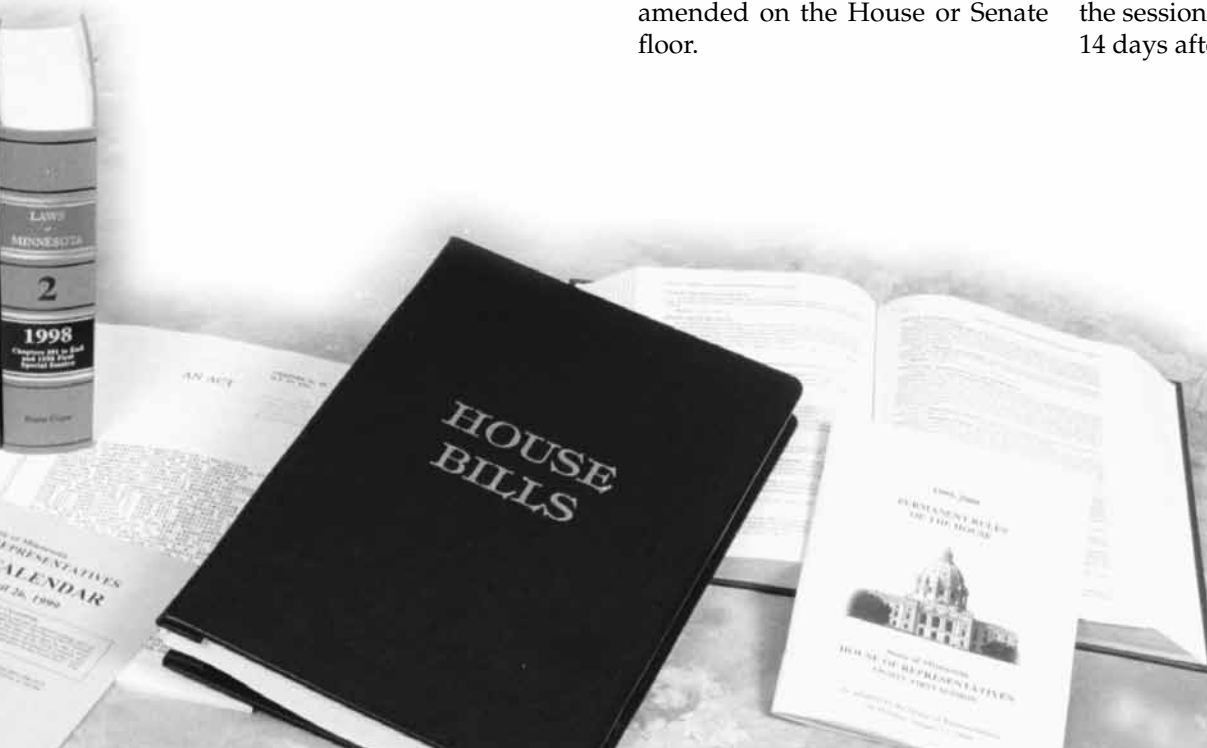
9 If the House and Senate versions of the bill are different, they go to a conference committee. In the House, the speaker appoints three or five representatives, and in the Senate, the Subcommittee on Committees of the Rules and Administration Committee selects the same number of senators to form the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

Floor

10 The conference committee's compromise bill then goes back to the House and the Senate for another vote. If both bodies pass the bill in this form, it is sent to the governor for approval or disapproval. (If one or both bodies reject the report, it goes back to the conference committee for further consideration.) A conference committee report cannot be amended on the House or Senate floor.

Governor

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



BILL INTRODUCTIONS

JANUARY 13 - 20, 2011

HOUSE FILES 93 - 174

Tuesday, January 18

HF93-Liebling (DFL)

Transportation Policy & Finance

Ariana Celeste MacNamara Memorial Bridge designated.

HF94-Urdahl (R)

Commerce & Regulatory Reform

Incandescent light bulb use and manufacture authorized in Minnesota.

HF95-Hortman (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Mississippi River critical area eliminated.

HF96-Davids (R)

Taxes

Individual income and corporate franchise taxes conformed to the federal section 179 expensing allowance for certain taxpayers.

HF97-Davids (R)

Taxes

Individual income and corporate franchise taxes conformed to the federal section 179 expensing allowance for certain taxpayers.

HF98-Diil (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Itasca County; pilot land exchange process created for tax-forfeited lands.

HF99-Anzelc (DFL)

Veterans Services Division

Tax exemption provided for property owned and operated by veterans organizations.

HF100-Urdahl (R)

Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance

Social host liability criminal penalty imposed.

HF101-Urdahl (R)

Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance

Livestock investment grant funding provided.

HF102-Mahoney (DFL)

Government Operations & Elections

Minnesota science and technology program established.

HF103-Murray (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Unemployment insurance eligibility and extension provisions modified.

HF104-Koenen (DFL)

Ways & Means

Department of Corrections claim settlements provided.

HF105-Dettmer (R)

State Government Finance

Washington County; Disabled Veterans Rest Camp on Big Marine Lake matching grant funding provided to be used for improvements.

HF106-Anderson, P. (R)

Taxes

Water used for public safety purposes tax exemption provided.

HF107-Rukavina (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Northern pike spearing slot limits eliminated.

HF108-Nelson (DFL)

Taxes

Income tax check-off authorized for multiple sclerosis research and assistance.

HF109-Hansen (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Board of Water and Soil Resources funding provided for RIM conservation reserve.

HF110-Kahn (DFL)

Government Operations & Elections

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement membership increased.

HF111-Poppe (DFL)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Cedar River state water trail designated.

HF112-Barrett (R)

Taxes

Taylor's Falls; border city development zone powers established.

HF113-Quam (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

Gross revenue payment exemption provided.

HF114-Barrett (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Unemployment insurance eligibility requirements modified.

HF115-Barrett (R)

Education Reform

School district Jan. 15 deadline repealed by which a collective bargaining agreement must be reached or face a state aid penalty.

HF116-Quam (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

DR-1941 area previous appropriation modified.

HF117-Peterson, S. (DFL)

Education Finance

High-need public high school grant program funding provided for additional student counseling services.

HF118-Scalze (DFL)

Transportation Policy & Finance

Rice Street and I-694 interchange funding provided.

HF119-Scalze (DFL)

Transportation Policy & Finance

White Bear Avenue and I-694 interchange funding provided.

HF120-Morrow (DFL)

Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance

Local disaster assistance program and local disaster fund established.

HF121-Morrow (DFL)

Education Reform

Teacher performance assessments established.

HF122-Davids (R)

Health & Human Services Reform

Dental plan contracts and provider audits regulated.

HF123-Ward (DFL)

Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance

Unlawful passing on the right resulting in bodily injury or death penalties increased.

HF124-Holberg (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Firearm possession restrictions modified for taking deer by archery.

HF125-Gunther (R)

State Government Finance

Executive and legislative branch agency appropriation reductions made.

HF126-Nornes (R)

Higher Education Policy and Finance

Higher education appropriation reductions made.

HF127-Dean (R)

State Government Finance

State employee salary and wage freeze instituted.

HF128-Abeler (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

Human services appropriation reductions made.

HF129-Davids (R)

Taxes

Tax aids and credits and payment reductions made.

HF130-Holberg (R)

Ways & Means

Fiscal year 2011 appropriations reduced, policies changed and appropriation reductions made for fiscal years 2012 and 2013; and tax aid, credits and payment reductions made.

Thursday, January 20

HF131-Hackbarth (R)

Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance

The right of citizens to keep, bear and use arms for certain purposes is provided as fundamental and shall not be infringed; constitutional amendment proposed

HF132-Hackbarth (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Citizen oversight of certain natural resources fund accounts provided; reports to legislative committees and divisions required.

HF133-Fritz (DFL)**Education Reform**

Trial placements for eligible children allowed at the Minnesota state academies.

HF134-Woodard (R)**Education Reform**

Charter school authorizer approval deadline modified.

HF135-Hackbarth (R)**Health & Human Services Reform**

Authority to regulate wells modified.

HF136-Morrow (DFL)**Veterans Services Division**

Eligibility extended for Gold Star motor vehicle license plates to include children and siblings of persons who have died while serving in active military service.

HF137-Ward (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Terry McGaughey Memorial Bridge named.

HF138-Ward (DFL)**Government Operations & Elections**

Permitted holding period for exempt property held for economic development increased for cities with a population of 20,000 or less.

HF139-Dill (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Lake Vermilion State Park development funding provided.

HF140-Cornish (R)**Transportation Policy & Finance**

Approved security motor vehicle and uniform markings clarified.

HF141-Cornish (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Penalties for injuring public safety dogs increased.

HF142-O'Driscoll (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance**

Green Acres and agricultural classifications restored to pre-2008 status.

HF143-Anderson, P. (R)**Taxes**

Glenwood Township; aggregate material tax imposition allowed for Glenwood Township in Pope County's stead.

HF144-Hilty (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Carlton County; Public and private sale of certain tax-forfeited land bordering public water authorized.

HF145-Hilty (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Unemployment insurance eligibility modified for children of business owners.

HF146-Hilty (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Carlton County; public sale authorized for tax-forfeited land.

HF147-Buesgens (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

The full House of Representatives and the full Senate required to approve per diem and expense reimbursements for members.

HF148-Kiffmeyer (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance**

Green Acres and agricultural classifications restored to pre-2008 status, Green Acres working group created and appointments provided.

HF149-Cornish (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Health care provided to survivors of peace officers or firefighters killed in the line of duty.

HF150-Rukavina (DFL)**Ways & Means**

Commissioner of management and budget required to adjust for projected inflation in forecasting state expenditures.

HF151-Cornish (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Commissioner of corrections required to post information on the Internet for all predatory offenders.

HF152-Cornish (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Criminal possession or sale of identification documents crime created.

HF153-Hortman (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Coon Rapids Dam improvement funding provided.

HF154-Cornish (R)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Congress memorialized to delist the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act.

HF155-Benson, J. (DFL)**Taxes**

Levy limits abolished.

HF156-Ward (DFL)**Taxes**

School district referendum market value tax base altered.

HF157-Ward (DFL)**Veterans Services Division**

Brainerd; new veteran nursing home funding provided.

HF158-Anzelc (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Itasca County; domestic materials required as a condition of using public funds for infrastructure.

HF159-Davids (R)**Capital Investment**

Hokah; match requirement eliminated.

HF160-Drazkowski (R)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Lake Zumbro and Schmidt Lake restoration funding provided.

HF161-Drazkowski (R)**Public Safety & Crime Prevention Policy & Finance**

Permit renewal to purchase firearms from federally licensed dealers time period extended.

HF162-Drazkowski (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

Political subdivisions authorized to publish proceedings, official notices and summaries on their websites in lieu of newspaper publication.

HF163-Drazkowski (R)**Education Finance**

School district revenue mandated reserve permanently repealed for staff development programs.

HF164-Lillie (DFL)**Veterans Services Division**

Military retirement pay subtraction provided.

HF165-Simon (DFL)**Government Operations & Elections**

Elections; persons who are 17 years old authorized to vote.

HF166-Clark (DFL)**Commerce & Regulatory Reform**

Lead poisoning prevention provided.

HF167-Clark (DFL)**Health & Human Services Reform**

Autism research and report required by the health commissioner; Department of Human Services required to train autism service providers; and autism service option notification required for Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare recipients.

HF168-Ward (DFL)**Transportation Policy & Finance**

Private carriers of pupils authorization requirements provided and technical changes made.

HF169-Falk (DFL)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Portable deer stands allowed to be erected and left unattended on public lands during deer season.

HF170-Daudt (R)**Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance**

Prohibition on issuing certificate of need for new nuclear power plant abolished.

HF171-Daudt (R)**Health & Human Services Reform**

MFIP electronic benefit transfers modified and photo identification required.

HF172-Benson, J. (DFL)**Education Reform**

Minimum school counselor to student ratio established and report required.

HF173-Peppin (R)**Government Operations & Elections**

Sunset Commission created; sunset and review of state agencies provided.

HF174-Peppin (R)**State Government Finance**

Department of Revenue required to issue a request for proposals for a tax analytics and business intelligence contract.

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MINNESOTA INDEX

Higher Education

Percent of job openings by 2018 that are projected to require postsecondary education.....	70
Percent of 25-34 year olds in state with an associate degree or higher	48
State rank.....	3
Percent of 25-34 year olds in state with a bachelor's degree or higher	35
State rank.....	8
Students enrolled in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system	
in fall 2010.....	155,601
In fall 2006.....	134,220
Students enrolled at the University of Minnesota in fall 2010	67,932
In fall 2006.....	65,753
Percent of full-time, first-time University of Minnesota students who entered school	
in 2003 and had completed a bachelor's degree at the same institution by 2009	63
Percent in 2006, 2002, who had completed a degree within six years of entrance.....	57, 51
Percent of state universities' students in same three years	48, 47, 44
Percent of private college students	72, 68, 71
Average tuition and fees at University of Minnesota in 2010-11 school year	\$11,091
Average at a four-year state university in 2010-11 school year	\$6,596
Average at a private college or university in 2010-11 school year	\$30,816
Approximate percent of state General Fund spent on higher education	
in fiscal year 2010.....	8.8
Approximate percent in fiscal year 1995	12
Approximate percent in fiscal year 1987	15
Billions in aid for students attending a postsecondary institution in Minnesota in 2009.....	\$1.07
Percent in institutional grants and scholarships.....	50.6
Percent in federal, need-based grants	28.1
Percent in Minnesota state grants.....	13.4
Estimated number of students per year who receive a state grant.....	80,000
Average annual grant.....	\$1,800
Percent of grant dollars awarded to students with family incomes below \$50,000.....	85
Millions projected to be spent on state grants in fiscal year 2011	\$119
Projected number of recipients	82,500
Millions spent on state grants in fiscal year 2010.....	\$168
Projected number of recipients	103,544
Millions spent on state grants in fiscal year 2005.....	\$124
Projected number of recipients	73,410
Year the SELF Loan was established by the Legislature and governor	1983
Estimated number of annual borrowers	20,000
Estimated millions of dollars annually provided.....	\$90

— M. Cook

Sources: Minnesota Office of Higher Education, including Jan. 18 presentation to the House Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee; University of Minnesota; Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, including Jan. 13 presentation to the House Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee.