

SESSION WEEKLY



VIKINGS STADIUM IN DOUBT

ONE VOTE SHORT FOR FIXING THE CAPITOL

STEPPING DOWN: DITTRICH, KOENEN, KRIESEL, SLAWIK

MORE NEW LAWS, VETOES

HF2999 - HF3006

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION
MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES • PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES
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Flashback to 1992 and 2002

Double down on exemption from emission testing

Drivers with diesel-powered vehicles are now required to drive to state emissions testing stations to get proof that they are exempt from the testing. An amendment to a clean air bill (HF2437) contains a provision by Rep. Harriet McPherson (IR-Stillwater) that would allow owners of these vehicles that are already exempt from the testing to verify the exemption when they get their license tabs instead of driving to a testing station.

The Department of Public Safety says it won't require diesel drivers to make second trips to the testing stations anyway, but the new measure will help newly registered diesel vehicles.

About 1.1 million vehicles were inspected for air pollution emissions since the new state law became effective in the Twin Cities metropolitan area in 1991. Vehicle owners pay \$8 annually for the test.

— Session Weekly April 17, 1992

Covering your tracks

"I've learned something in my few years here at the Legislature," said Rep. Tony Sertich (DFL-Chisholm) during the House-Senate conference committee on the omnibus economic development bill.

Sertich and other House conferees were being asked if they had signed a particular petition. His comment lends insight into the nuances of legislative debate.



Rep. Tony Sertich

"Don't write down what you can say, and don't say what you can nod," he said grinning.

— Session Weekly April 19, 2002

Contents

- FIRST READING:** Committee defeat puts Vikings stadium plan in doubt • 3-4
- AT ISSUE:** Capitol restoration bill falls one vote short on House floor • 16
- PEOPLE:** Dittrich's career focused on education funding, small business • 17
- PEOPLE:** With challenges ahead, Koenen moves to the Senate • 18
- PEOPLE:** Kriesel steps down to focus on being a dad, husband • 19
- PEOPLE:** In her final term, Slawik sees victories on early childhood issues • 20
- GOVERNOR'S DESK:** Tracking new laws, vetoes • 21-23
- BILL INTRODUCTIONS:** HF2999-HF3006 • 23
- INDEX:** Enjoying the outdoors • 24

SESSION WEEKLY

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On the cover: A participant from the Hancock Recreation Center in St. Paul connects for a hit as the St. Paul Saints baseball team brought players to the State Capitol to boost support for a new Saints' ballpark.

— Photo by Paul Battaglia

Wait until next year, maybe

House committee defeats stadium funding bill, Vikings' future unclear

By MIKE COOK

The consensus after a negative House committee vote was that a "Hail Mary" pass may be about the only chance the Minnesota Vikings have left to get a stadium bill passed this legislative session.

Despite the session likely entering its final days, the stadium outcome remains cloudy as the pressure to reach a deal amps up.

A very clear message has been sent that next year is too late for a deal, Gov. Mark Dayton said April 19 after he spoke with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Art Rooney II, chairman of the league's stadium committee, by phone for about 20 minutes.

"If there's a willingness to do it, now is the time," Dayton said.

Goodell and Rooney are expected to fly to Minnesota to meet with Dayton April 20. The governor hopes legislative leaders will also take part. Without a deal this year, Dayton believes the league will have to

seriously consider the viability of this market.

The meeting would be four days after the House Government Operations and Elections Committee failed to approve a bill that calls for funding a new stadium that would house the NFL team. The April 16 vote was 9-6 with five of nine Republicans voting for the bill and just one of six DFLers.

"We can't pass the stadium by ourselves," House Speaker Kurt Zellers (R-Maple Grove) said the next day. "This has always been a bipartisan process."

Sponsored by Rep. Morrie Lanning (R-Moorhead), HF2810 calls for a \$975 million fixed-roof stadium to be built primarily on the Metrodome site on the

eastern edge of downtown Minneapolis. The team would cover \$427 million of construction costs; the state \$398 million; and Minneapolis \$150 million.

Money from electronic pull tabs, electronic bingo and tipboard games would be used to pay the state's share of the cost. Supporters noted that charities would get tax relief and more gambling proceeds while the state also would get more revenue. Lanning said \$42 million per year would be needed to pay debt service on the bonds. The bill contains four back-up proposals in case, as some legislators predict, electronic gambling devices do not meet revenue estimates.

During his presentation, Lanning said four stadium funding proposals have been put forth in the past seven years, but this was by far the best. "This proposal has had more work and effort going into it than any of the other past bills. It has been vetted more; it has been tested more than any other bill. ... We need to get this bill on the floor of the House and Senate where the members can once and

First Reading continued on page 4



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

It was standing room only at the House Government Operations and Elections Committee April 16 as members take up the Vikings stadium bill.

for all decide if we're going to do something relative to this stadium issue or not."

Lester Bagley, the team's vice president of public affairs and stadium development, appeared frustrated when he spoke after the vote, saying the team has done everything it's been asked, and after more than a decade of trying there still hasn't been a vote on the House floor. "This sends a strong message to the Vikings and the NFL," he said without elaborating.

He refused to issue an ultimatum about the team departing the Upper Midwest. "I won't speculate. We've got time and people trying to move it forward," he said. "To have an NFL team in this market we have to address this issue."

The bill's companion, SF2391, sponsored by Sen. Julie Rosen (R-Fairmont), awaits action by the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee. It's been sitting in the committee for a month. In addition, a legislator could try to amend the stadium language onto another bill.

Bagley said the team would continue to push the proposal as long as the Legislature remains in session.

Lanning acknowledged that the issue isn't going away anytime soon, and will be a constant topic during the upcoming election season. "The only way this will go away is if we get it to the floor and vote it up or down."

"While this may not be the perfect package yet, I think it's worthy of continuing forward," said Rep. Carol McFarlane (R-White Bear Lake).

Before each voted against the bill, Rep. David Hancock (R-Bemidji) expressed concern about expanding gambling in the state, while Rep. Bev Scalze (DFL-Little Canada) noted the proposed gaming revenue going into the General Fund would better be spent paying off some of the \$2.4 billion the state owes K-12 education.

Importance of team

The team has played in the Metrodome since 1982, but team officials say the facility is antiquated and does not provide the needed revenue to remain competitive, nor does it offer a top-notch fan experience.

"The Vikings will not play another 10, 20, 30 years in the Metrodome," said Rep. Terry Morrow (DFL-St. Peter), a co-sponsor on the bill.

Supporters said this is a jobs bill, citing the 3.4 million man hours from the construction



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Morrie Lanning, right, and Rep. Terry Morrow testify before the House Government Operations and Elections Committee April 16 in support of a bill that would provide a stadium for the Minnesota Vikings. Lanning is sponsor of the bill.

industry that would be needed to build the facility.

Bagley said there is "no doubt" that the Vikings are Minnesota's team. "More than half of our residents of Minnesota follow the Vikings every season. Over the last three seasons the team has averaged a 65 television share which means 65 percent of televisions are tuned to Vikings' games. When you add our radio audience of more than 700,000 and the 63,000 at the stadium, approximately 3 million Minnesotans follow the Vikings every Sunday. There's no other event or happening in Minnesota that can come close."

In addition to quality of life issues, Morrow said if the team was to leave, Minnesota would lose an estimated \$800 million in state income taxes over 30 years from players, staff and visiting players.

Bagley pointed out that the Metrodome was built with zero cost to the state, and since its opening has generated \$340 million in tax revenue to the state.

Ted Mondale, chairman of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission, said that without the Vikings, the Twins Cities image will suffer. "Sooner or later if we don't act on this they will leave and we will be a major league city that will look like a B-class city. ... The state in this deal brings in \$450 million more than it puts in over the 30-year lifecycle of this funding."

Funding options

Bagley said the \$427 million team capital contribution would be the third-largest in league history, and the \$13 million in annual rent would be the league's highest.

Nonetheless, he and Steve Poppen, the team's chief financial officer, faced some pointed questions from members about the team's funding contribution, including why the state should help out a billionaire owner who could pay for it all himself.

Bagley said the so-called "People's Stadium" would be owned by the public and would only be used by the Vikings 10 dates a year. The rest of the year it could be used for amateur sports and other activities. "We have an opportunity to leverage the third-largest private contribution up front to make sure we have a facility that can be used by everyone going forward with all the events consistent with what currently occur at the Metrodome."

Rep. Ryan Winkler (DFL-Golden Valley) expressed displeasure that the team would not be transparent about its net worth, especially when its value would increase with a new stadium. "As representatives of public taxpayers, how do we know we're getting a good deal? ... If we knew better how much you were going to make off this deal, we could better judge and better negotiate how much of this facility should be funded by the taxpayer. Right now we're kind of negotiating in the dark."

Poppen, who said naming rights would likely net the team \$4.5 million to \$7.5 million annually, said the team has had its financial statements reviewed at the request of the governor's office and the business community in a confidential manner. "We believe this is a good deal for Minnesota."

City charter override

Committee Chairwoman Rep. Joyce Peppin (R-Rogers) successfully amended the bill to require that Minneapolis voters have a say in their city's plan to spend \$150 million for the stadium. An amendment to the city charter approved by voters in the 1990s states that no more than \$10 million can go toward financing a professional sports facility without voter approval. The bill, as proposed, would invalidate that provision.

Minneapolis City Council President Barbara Johnson said the Legislature has overridden the city's charter "over 20 times" since 1980. 🗽

HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 5 - 19, 2012

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select bills heard in House committees or divisions and other House activities held April 5-19. 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 acted on by the governor.

Business & Commerce

Health care term confusion

**Signed
by
the
governor**

State statutes lay out definitions to help clarify what is meant by terms that are used. Confusion over the use of "health plan company," prompted a new law sponsored by Rep. Tim Sanders (R-Blaine) and Sen. Gary Dahms (R-Redwood Falls).

Sanders said the term health care company is used 130 times in statute, but the products referenced are "expressly excluded from the definition of health plan company." The excluded products are ones that are not usually considered to be conventional health insurance, but are specialized products that provide such coverage as disability or long term care, or income protection.

Signed by Gov. Mark Dayton April 5, the new law, effective Aug. 1, 2012, states "the usage of the term does not apply to an entity that offers, sells, issues, or renews only products expressly excluded from the definition of a health plan," as laid out by statute.

HF1998/SF1793*/CH160

— L. SCHUTZ

House rejects alcohol change

Debate surrounding a bill permitting certain alcohol purchases turned into a heated discussion on the House floor April 16 regarding who was responsible for last summer's state government shutdown.

Sponsored by Rep. Mike LeMieur (R-Little Falls), HF2463 seeks to allow licensed bars, restaurants and other entities to purchase alcohol without an official buyer's card if the state is unable to issue one, such as during a state government shutdown. The House declined to pass the bill 67-63.

DFLers expressed outrage that the bill

would ensure alcohol sale in the event of a shutdown, rather than guarantee other services they said were more critical, such as state-provided child care.

"I think the priorities this reflects shows that we're not focused on the things Minnesotans really care about," said Rep. Melissa Hortman (DFL-Brooklyn Park).

DFLers also argued that the legislation would only facilitate future shutdowns.

"The next shutdown will go down a lot easier for Minnesotans as long as they can get a beer through it," said Rep. Terry Morrow (DFL-St. Peter).

Republicans refuted these claims, instead blaming the DFL for the 2011 shutdown.

Rep. Joe McDonald (R-Delano) credited his party with resolving last year's budget crisis. He criticized DFLers for what he said was an over-reliance on tax revenue, adding, "It's not always about taxing the rich. We spend enough money here."

Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker) urged members to pass the bill, questioning the need for debate about responsibility for the state shutdown.

"What we're offering here is just to be able to buy beer. It's pretty simple. It's not the end of the world."

Sen. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) sponsors SF2186, the companion. It awaits action by the full Senate.

— E. SCHMIDTKE

Changes to MCHA are now law

**Signed
by
the
governor**

The Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association will see a series of technical changes in its governing rules.

Created by state law, the association is a private, nonprofit corporation that offers health insurance to Minnesotans who would otherwise be unable to obtain coverage at an affordable rate, or at all, due to pre-existing conditions.

A number of alterations to the organization's method of calculating premiums, its rate calendar and the products it offers were signed into law April 9 by Gov. Mark Dayton. The law took effect the following day.

Rep. Joe Hoppe (R-Chaska) and Sen. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) sponsor the

law. Hoppe said the law was needed as part of technical changes to the association's governing requirements.

HF2216*/SF1910/CH170

— E. SCHMIDTKE

Liability for trucking companies

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Companies that use trucking firms to transport goods will no longer be allowed to contractually hold themselves harmless for merchandise damage.

Supporters say the law, signed April 5 by Gov. Mark Dayton, will promote personal responsibility and ensure that trucking companies, especially those that are small businesses, are not unfairly held liable for damage outside their control.

Rep. Tim Kelly (R-Red Wing) and Sen. Julianne Ortman (R-Chanhassen) sponsor the law, which is effective April 6, 2012, and applies to existing contracts and those entered or renewed on or after that date.

HF1992*/SF1687/CH165

— E. SCHMIDTKE

Licensing for satellite installers

Those who install satellite systems at customers' homes may find themselves going through a separate licensing process beginning in October.

Currently these installers, as well as those who work with pools, heating and air conditioning, must obtain a low-voltage technician license. Rep. Tim Sanders (R-Blaine) sponsors HF2732/SF2324* that would provide for a separate licensing structure that he believes more appropriately fits the duties of satellite installers.

The House passed it 133-0 April 18. Sen. John Pederson (R-St. Cloud) sponsors the bill in the Senate, where it passed 53-8 on April 5. It now moves to the governor for action.

Sanders said the bill was needed because a 2002 statute creating the current licensing structure unnecessarily included satellite installers, whose work differs from others who need the license. He said the change would not affect the Department of Labor and Industry, which would still oversee the issuance of these licenses.

— E. SCHMIDTKE

Insurance for farm homes clarified

Signed
by
the
governor

Township mutual insurance companies insure a high percentage of the state's farms; however, some agents argue that the regulating statutes need clarification.

A new law, signed by Gov. Mark Dayton April 5, will tweak current law as it relates to insuring farm homes through combined policies.

Sponsored by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Gary Dahms (R-Redwood Falls), the law comes in response to a case now before the Minnesota Supreme Court. It pertains to a value dispute between a farmer and his insurance company over the home that was a total loss due to fire.

Davids said the law will add needed clarification for insurance companies that operate under laws that don't quite line up with those covering more standard insurance coverage. The new law is effective April 6, 2012, and is not retroactive. Therefore it will not affect the outcome of the suit before the courts.

HF2342/SF1934*/CH162

— L. SCHUTZ

SESSION PLAN



PHOTO BY PAUL BATTAGLIA

House Speaker Kurt Zellers, right, and Sen. Majority Leader David Senjem, speak to the media after an April 17 meeting with Gov. Mark Dayton to discuss how they might proceed toward the end of session.

Civil Law

Protecting private data

Prevailing wage refers to a formula used to calculate the wages that contractors must pay their workers for building projects funded in whole or in part by the state.

A provision in a technical data practices bill related to prevailing wage reporting had DFLers concerned that it was an assault on the issue that nearly splits along party lines.

Rep. Peggy Scott (R-Andover) and Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove) sponsor HF1466/SF1143* that would detail how private data is collected, maintained or disseminated. The House passed the bill 133-1, but only after the addition of several successful amendments. It now returns to the Senate, where the original bill was passed 57-0 on May 16, 2011.

Of concern to Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) was a provision to classify the contact information of an employee and/or contractor doing business with a government entity as private data.

He said this would, in effect, make policing of the state's prevailing wage law impossible. There is little state oversight of contractor

reporting of these wages, and without contact information, it would be nearly impossible to verify their accuracy, he said.

"You are allowing companies to get by with fraud against the taxpayers," Mullery said about the system that relies on contractors policing themselves.

He offered a successful amendment to delete the provision; however, Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), who voted on the prevailing side, argued successfully for the amendment's reconsideration.

After further discussion, Mullery withdrew the amendment and proposed another that included language supported by Rep. Denny McNamara (R-Hastings) that says information can be disclosed for prevailing wage law enforcement purposes.

An amendment of note receiving overwhelming support was offered by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia).

A recent change to law requires those covered by state insurance benefits to provide verification to Minnesota Management & Budget of dependent eligibility. His amendment would prohibit the practice.

"It has caused a lot of consternation. Why state employees would have to be forced to give that information out is beyond me. My amendment repeals the special session law

that says they can't ask for that information; that is private information."

— L. SCHUTZ

Presumption of joint child custody

An emotional debate that crossed party and gender lines had members characterizing a bill to change the state's child custody laws as "long overdue," while others termed it "problematic and would negatively affect children for years to come."

Sponsored by Rep. Peggy Scott (R-Andover) HF322 would change current law to a presumption of joint legal and joint physical custody with a minimum of 45.1 percent of parenting time for each parent. A parent is currently entitled to receive at least 25 percent of parenting time. Provisions would be extended to those who are not married, but where parentage has been established.

The bill passed the House 80-53 April 18, and it now moves to the Senate where Sen. Pam Wolf (R-Spring Lake Park) is the sponsor.

At every committee stop the bill has made over its two-year journey to the House floor, testifiers' stories have been "heart-wrenching and breath taking," Scott said. The current system pits parents in a divorce situation



PHOTO BY PAUL BATTAGLIA

Victor Toso draws a crowd as he expresses his support for HF322 that would establish a rebuttable presumption of joint legal and joint physical child custody in divorce cases.

against one another, she said. "It is a contest to see who is the most fit. The day before a divorce, (someone) is considered a fit parent, and then at the end of the day they are considered a noncustodial parent.

Rep. Tina Liebling (DFL-Rochester) said the bill would make "extreme changes" to the state's custody laws. She said it proposes a one-size-fits-all solution when each family situation is different. She is concerned that the bill does not take the child's needs into consideration, but only those of the parents.

A successful amendment, directed mostly toward helping deployed service members, would make virtual parenting time part of the plan. Put forward by Rep. John Lesch (DFL-St. Paul), he said the provision would reflect the new technology that people use to stay in touch.

The bill is expected to cost the General Fund \$1.5 million in fiscal year 2013 and \$4 million in each of the following two fiscal

years. The cost reflects the additional court staffing that will be added, according to a nonpartisan fiscal note.

"I think this is a small amount of money to invest in making children have as close to equal access to both parents as possible," Scott said during an April 16 House Ways and Means Committee meeting.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) disagreed. "I'm very troubled by changing the standard we have in the state which is in the best interest in the child, to essentially moving to a parent standard which is the best interest of the parent. I think we are taking a huge expensive road that is not good for children, either."

— L. SCHUTZ

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at 651-296-2146 or 800-657-3550

Judge could decide relocation costs

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Current law provides for relocation assistance funds for those whose property is acquired by a local jurisdiction through eminent domain.

However, a new law will address situations when agreement can't be reached.

Sponsored by Rep. Denise Ditttrich (DFL-Champlin) and Sen. Benjamin Kruse (R-Brooklyn Park) the new law, signed by Gov. Mark Dayton April 18, would provide an opportunity for an administrative judge hearing if an agreement can't be reached.

The law would provide for a contested case hearing to determine whether a person is eligible to receive relocation assistance in the first place, if it is denied by the acquiring authority. The administrative law judge's determination of the amount of the assistance would be final.

The law is effective April 19, 2012, and applies to relocation assistance claims and claims of eligibility for relocation assistance pending on or made after that date.

HF1833/SF1620*/CH184

— L. SCHUTZ

Timeshares face foreclosure problem

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Timeshares, seen as the affordable way to own a vacation getaway, are facing their own foreclosure problems, with owners defaulting on maintenance

assessments.

Associations, formed to look out for all the owners' interests, including property maintenance, are left to foreclose on those who are delinquent in payments. For some associations, how the property's title is recorded can make the process extremely expensive.

Signed by Gov. Mark Dayton April 18 and sponsored by Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) and Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove), a new law could provide some relief and eliminate a barrier to timeshare resale. It is effective Aug. 1, 2012.

Carrie Ruud, a governmental lobbying consultant from Breezy Point, told a House committee that there are 12,000 timeshare owners in Breezy Point represented by 14 timeshare associations. Because the county uses a Torrens recording system, the legal costs can be prohibitive for associations.

Timeshare values average between \$200 to \$600 a week. The cost to foreclose can

average \$2,000 to \$2,500, she said; however, in a Torrens situation, the costs can double.

The law, while protecting due process, would allow associations to secure new certificates of title after the completion of property conducted foreclosures.

HF2763/ SF2184*/CH178

— L. SCHUTZ

Child support liens addressed

**Signed
by
the
governor**

A law was enacted in 2010 that extended the time a lien could be in place on real estate for unpaid child support. But the 20-year timeframe has caused some problems for those tracking real estate liens, because all others are established at 10 years.

Signed by Gov. Mark Dayton April 18 and sponsored by Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville) and Sen. Scott Newman (R-Hutchinson), a new law will change the lien provision to 10 years and make it retroactive to April 15, 2010.

Holberg said that since enactment of the original law, “they tried to come up with some sort of solution, but it is unworkable the way real estate records are kept.”

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) acknowledged the sensitivity over the issue. “Anytime you get into the area of child support, people get a little worried,” he said.

HF2476/SF2114*/CH183

— L. SCHUTZ

Successor liability still stands

**Vetoed
by
the
governor**

Crown Holdings, Inc. is a century-old packaging company that has a facility in Owatonna. At the expense of those suffering from asbestosis and mesothelioma, it would have been the beneficiary of a bill vetoed by Gov. Mark Dayton April 9.

The legislation would have “fundamentally and unfairly” altered state law regarding corporate successor liability, Dayton wrote in his veto letter. “I am convinced that this legislation will have a broad scope and will set a dangerous precedent for future efforts to shield corporate defendants from liability.”

Crown faces several asbestos-related lawsuits, encumbered through their merger decades ago with a company that used asbestos before the dangers were known.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Kelby Woodard (R-Belle Plaine) and Sen. Mike Parry (R-Waseca), would have overturned Minnesota law on corporate successor

liability as it relates to asbestos-related injuries.

“The cancer causing nature of asbestos has long been known, and it will continue to claim lives across Minnesota and the country for years to come.” Dayton wrote. He added that people should expect fairness in the courtroom and “demand legislation that does not change the course of litigation when potential injuries are known to exist.”

HF1418/SF1236*/CH168

— L. SCHUTZ

Clawbacks reduced to two years

**Signed
by
the
governor**

The statute of limitations on so-called “clawback lawsuits” has been trimmed from six years to two years.

Signed April 3 by Gov. Mark Dayton, a new law that took effect the next day aims to protect nonprofits and religious groups from the lawsuits that are often used in an attempt to recover funds stolen from Ponzi-scheme victims.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), who sponsors the law with Sen. Benjamin Kruse (R-Brooklyn Park), said the legislation comes as a result of the Tom Petters case. A trustee for the Petters fraud victims is currently trying to get millions of dollars back from charities that received Petters-run foundation donations, in some cases

many years after the donation was made.

Because the donated money was fraudulently obtained by the donor, state law allows demands to give the money back so it can be fairly distributed among all victims. The law requires recipients to return tainted contributions, if a lawsuit seeking the return is begun within two years after a donation.

Although he understands the bill could hurt investors in Ponzi schemes, Davids said it’s very difficult for charities operating on a shoestring budget to return large sums of money they may have received and already spent many years ago.

HF1384*/SF1084/CH151

— M. COOK

Education

Settlement info could become public

The Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191 paid an employee more than a quarter-million dollars as part of a settlement package earlier this year. Due to legal restrictions, it was unable to provide the public with information about the agreement.

Rep. Pam Myhra (R-Burnsville) sponsors HF2647 that would allow that type of information to become public data. Though it

LAUGHTER YOGA



PHOTO BY PAUL BATTAGLIA

Lynn O'Brien of Minneapolis participates in a Laughter Yoga class in the Capitol Rotunda April 18. Laughter Yoga is an exercise routine and a complete wellbeing workout that combines unconditional, contagious laughter with deep breathing.

wouldn't retroactively impact the Burnsville agreement, the bill does seek to affect future agreements involving government entities paying out \$10,000 or more of public money to employees. When a payment is made, specific reasons for the agreement would need to become available.

The House passed the bill 131-0 April 16. It now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Dan Hall (R-Burnsville) is the sponsor.

Myhra said the bill would lend further clarity and transparency to government.

While supporting the larger bill, Rep. Rick Hansen (DFL-South St. Paul) raised concerns about an author's amendment Myhra successfully offered, which would limit these transparency requirements to counties of 5,000 residents or more. His motion to strike that language failed following arguments that the bill could put undue stress on smaller counties.

— E. SCHMIDTKE

Elections

Lobbyist disclosure requirements

The House voted April 17 to tighten disclosure requirements for lobbyists, but rejected a measure that would have impacted groups that disseminate "model legislation" to state lawmakers.

Sponsored by Rep. Joyce Peppin (R-Rogers) and Sen. Ray Vandeveer (R-Forest Lake), HF2684/SF2334* would clarify reporting requirements for public utility companies. It would require that lobbying disclosures be itemized rather than reported as one total number.

On the House floor, DFLers successfully offered several amendments to add to the list of types of spending lobbyists in the state must publicly disclose, including:

- spending related to efforts to influence recommendations of a legislative council or commission;
- spending on industry conventions, facility tours, travel arrangements, private jets and other hospitality-related expenses; and
- spending on efforts to promote or defeat a ballot question or a candidate for public office.

Peppin said she would accept the DFL amendments as "friendly" because she believed they are already covered by current law.

The bill was passed 131-0. The Senate, which passed its version 64-0 on March 27,

refused to accept the changes. A conference committee has been requested to work out the differences.

Rep. Ryan Winkler (DFL-Golden Valley) unsuccessfully offered an amendment that would have expanded the definition of lobbying to include groups that disseminate "model legislation" for state legislatures to adopt. It would have forced disclosure of spending on things like hotel or travel accommodations for lawmakers to attend conferences where model legislation is promoted.

Supporters said the amendment would bring greater transparency to the activities of groups like the American Legislative Exchange Council, which many Democrats allege has greatly influenced Republican legislative priorities.

"People who want to influence legislation are paying a lot of money to bring legislators to nice locations to influence them, and the public is not being told," said Rep. Tina Liebling (DFL-Rochester).

Opponents said the amendment could have unintended consequences, such as impacting nonpartisan organizations like the National Conference of State Legislatures. Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton) said she regularly attends a variety of conferences around the country to learn from colleagues and discuss new ideas.

"I go to those conferences to glean ideas from other states ... this is what we're supposed to do," she said.

The amendment failed on a vote of 60-72.

— N. BUSSE

Employment

Prevailing wage could change

A proposal to change the prevailing wages for construction projects outside the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area is headed for the House floor, but even some of its supporters doubt its chances of becoming law this year.

Rep. Peggy Scott (R-Andover) sponsors HF1476 that would modify the formula used to calculate the wages that contractors must pay their workers for building projects funded in whole or in part by the state. This is known as the "prevailing wage."

Under the proposed changes, the method of calculating the prevailing wage would switch from the "mode," or the wage paid to

the largest number of workers, to the "mean," or average wage. The prevailing hours of labor would also change to accommodate four 10-hour workdays instead of five eight-hour days. The latter change would apply to the entire state.

The House Ways and Means Committee voted 17-14 to approve the bill April 16 and send it to the House floor. In March, committee members had voted 14-13 to table the bill.

Supporters argue the bill would lower construction costs and help small businesses compete for state contracts. Opponents say the bill will drive down wages for workers.

Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud) said Minnesota's method of calculating prevailing wages is different from most other states. He said opponents had mischaracterized the bill as a repeal of the prevailing wage law.

"We are not repealing prevailing wage in this bill, we're reforming it," Gottwalt said.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) said it doesn't matter what other states do, and that Minnesota's prevailing wage calculations are "the right way to do it."

All DFL committee members and two Republicans — Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker) and Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound) — voted against the measure. Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) said he was only supporting it because he's confident that it won't become law in its current form. He said the two sides need to work out a compromise on the issue.

Sen. John Pederson (R-St. Cloud) sponsors the companion, SF1199, which the Senate passed 37-29 on April 18.

— N. BUSSE

Env. & Natural Resources

Let the concrete slurry stand

Signed
by
the
governor

Road construction crews can generally leave concrete slurry by the roadside rather than hauling it to distant landfills.

Concrete slurry is a smooth liquid-like version of regular concrete that binds old concrete and new concrete surfaces.

Effective April 6, 2012, road crews can leave the substance at the construction site unless it is near sensitive wetlands or a lake.

Supporters said the change will make it easier for road crews to complete their work in a timely manner. It will also save companies

money by reducing transportation costs.

Gov. Mark Dayton signed the law, sponsored by Rep. Tim Sanders (R-Blaine) and Sen. John Pederson (R-St. Cloud), April 5.

HF2316/SF1860*/CH161

— B. GEIGER

Health & Human Services

Electronic compliance extension

Medical clinics with only one or two doctors would have until Jan. 1, 2015 to comply with new electronic prescription drug requirements. The provision is one of several in a health and human services policy bill passed 114-17 by the House on April 16.

Sponsored by Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud), HF2627 would also allow the Department of Health to include coverage expiration dates on a monthly roster of Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare enrollees, if the provider requests them. This would help providers prevent lapses in public health care coverage.

Counties and other local social service agencies would be given the ability to negotiate supplemental agreements with vendors regarding residential placement contracts. The agreement must be designed to encourage successful and cost-effective outcomes for clients and may include incentive payments for performance.

Last year, Rep. Joe Hoppe (R-Chaska) successfully offered a provision to allow Minnesota to enter into a reciprocal agreement with the country of Bermuda to enforce child support obligations. The provision was part of a larger health care bill that passed the Senate last year but not the House.

Hoppe's constituent told a House committee that her ex-husband owed more than \$53,000 in child support payments for her two sons. Hoppe said larger countries have reciprocity with the U.S., but that the federal government leaves it up to each state to share reciprocity with smaller countries. The provision is included in this bill to address the situation.

The bill now moves to the Senate, where Sen. David Hann (R-Eden Prairie) is the sponsor.

— S. HEGARTY

Administering abortion pill

When the RU-486 pill is dispensed to women seeking an abortion during the first

It's A LONG WAY UP

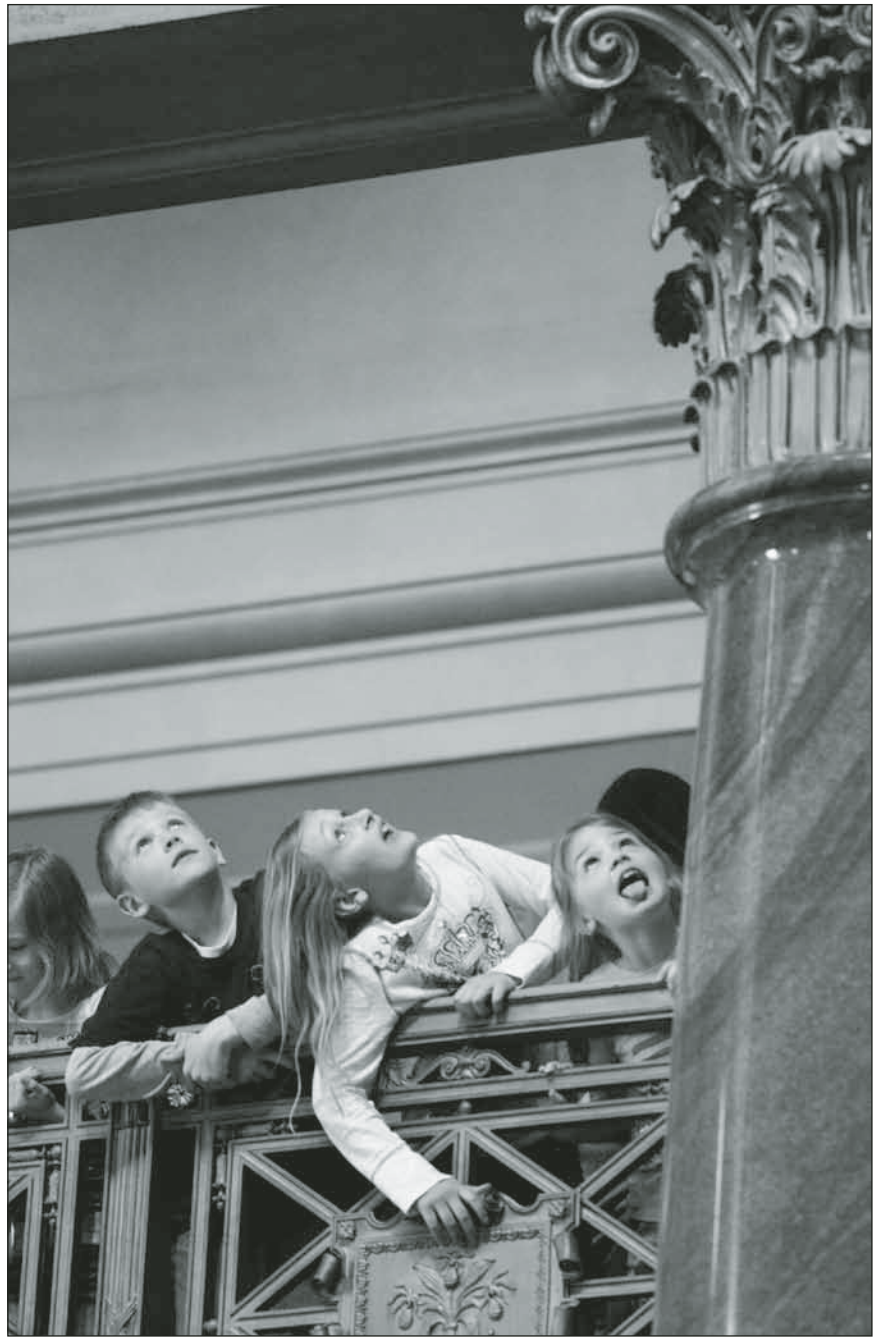


PHOTO BY PAUL BATTAGLIA

Students from Princeton South Elementary School in Princeton check out the ceiling of the Capitol Rotunda as they tour April 18.

few weeks of pregnancy, the doctor would need to be in the room when the drug or another chemical used to induce an abortion is administered, under a bill passed by the House.

The doctor would also need to encourage the woman to return within 12 to 18 days to confirm that the pregnancy was properly terminated, according to HF2341 sponsored by Rep. Joyce Peppin (R-Rogers). The bill

now moves to the Senate after the House passed it 80-48 on April 18. Sen. Paul Gazelka (R-Brainerd) is the Senate sponsor.

Opponents said the bill is an attempt to stop women from exercising their right to have an abortion and that it will lead to more late-term surgical abortions.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved RU-486 with the restriction that only a physician can administer the drug.

That includes tele-medicine practices that have enabled doctors to administer the drug by remote methods.

— S. HEGARTY

Automated dispensing expands

Signed
by
the
governor

More nursing homes will be able to distribute medications to their residents using an automated dispensing system designed to deter pharmaceutical waste and save

money.

Rep. Kathy Lohmer (R-Lake Elmo) and Sen. Benjamin Kruse (R-Brooklyn Park) sponsor a new law, which expands a previous pilot program statewide. Signed by the governor April 9, it takes effect Aug. 1, 2012.

Automatic drug dispensers are refilled daily at pharmacies, resulting in fewer medication errors, reduced drug waste from blister packs and improved control over prescription drugs, Lohmer said.

In rural areas where pharmacies are not in close proximity to nursing homes, the nursing home physician may obtain a restricted limited service pharmacy license to fill the automated dispensers.

HF2626/SF2173*/CH166

— S. HEGARTY

MA billing for volunteer dentists

Signed
by
the
governor

Dentists who voluntarily treat patients on Medical Assistance at free clinics, who are not otherwise enrolled as Medical Assistance service providers, will be able to treat and bill Medical Assistance under the clinic's auspices, beginning Aug. 1, 2012.

The Good Samaritan Dental Clinic in Rochester provides emergency dental services to Olmsted County residents and is staffed by volunteer dentists, hygienists, and community volunteers, but due to current law, doctors have had unintended consequences in their own practices if they volunteer their services.

On April 18, Gov. Mark Dayton signed the law, which Rep. Kim Norton (DFL-Rochester) and Sen. Carla Nelson (R-Rochester) sponsor.

HF2094/SF1626*/CH181

— S. HEGARTY

Watch for House Public Information Services
updates at
www.twitter.com/MNHouseInfo

Comparing health care delivery

Signed
by
the
governor

In 2008, the state began a process to reform health care by directing the health commissioner to design a way to rank hospitals on the quality and cost of care and to make the data available to the public.

However, the methodology and process was flawed and the information was never published. Officials went back to the table, resulting in Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud) and Sen. David Hann (R-Eden Prairie) sponsoring a law that tweaks how hospital information is gathered, verified, appealed or corrected prior to publication.

The Minnesota Medical Association, Minnesota Hospital Association and the Minnesota Council of Health Plans worked with legislators on how to manage the Provider Peer Grouping process and the health provider's right to review their data prior to public release.

A new advisory committee will help the Health Department sift through the available data. Committee members may include health care providers, health plan companies, consumers, state agencies, employers, academic researchers and other organizations.

The law, mostly effective July 1, 2012, also requires that data submitted by health care providers for comparison with their peers must be the most recent data available. Providers will have 60 days, instead of the previous 30 days, to review their data as presented by the state and prior to its public release.

The law will empower consumers and reward providers who deliver high quality and lower cost care, according to Gottwalt. Eventually, all medical clinics will be ranked.

Last year, the Health Department was also directed to work on a plan to develop and approve community health initiatives. At the same time, Statewide Health Improvement Program grants, which help pay for community health initiatives, were reduced due to budget cuts.

Hospitals and medical clinics that engage in community benefit programs said their initiatives are in response to local needs and that they don't need the additional state oversight that last year's legislation required. The law, signed April 5 by Gov. Mark Dayton, removes some of the department's oversight responsibilities that passed last year.

For example, effective Aug. 1, 2012, a

mandate is repealed that local community grantees must implement a plan approved by the commissioner to reduce obesity and tobacco use.

HF2237/SF1809*/CH164

— S. HEGARTY

Paramedic services reimbursed

Signed
by
the
governor

Last year, the Legislature directed the human services commissioner to determine which community paramedic services could be covered under Medical Assistance and to seek federal approval to reimburse for those services.

A new law authorizes community paramedics to now be reimbursed for such services, effective July 1, 2012, or if granted federal approval, whichever is later.

For example, Medical Assistance may cover chronic disease monitoring, medication compliance, immunizations and vaccinations for eligible recipients when the services are provided by a community paramedic. Eligibility is based on individuals who more frequently use emergency rooms or nursing homes for services that can be provided by a community paramedic at reduced costs.

Sponsored by Rep. Tara Mack (R-Apple Valley) and Sen. Julie Rosen (R-Fairmont), the law was signed by Gov. Mark Dayton on April 9.

HF2060/SF1543*/CH169

— S. HEGARTY

Options for abandoned babies

Mothers of newborns choosing not to keep their baby could have another legal option of where and when they can safely relinquish the child.

The "Give Life A Chance" provision in HF1967/SF1675*, sponsored by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Michelle Benson (R-Ham Lake), would allow ambulances to pick up a child after a 911 call is placed by the mother or a person with the mother's permission to relinquish the child.

The House passed the bill 127-1, as amended with a technical amendment. It now goes back to the Senate where the original bill passed 64-0 March 22.

Under current law, the mother has 72 hours after giving birth to relinquish her child to a hospital. Additionally, the bill would lengthen the time period from 72 hours after birth to up to seven days.

Other provisions include clarifying language related to children's adoption;

protection, support and care laws; and aligning them with federal laws and definitions. It also addresses adult foster care and mental health issues.

— S. HEGARTY

Local Government

Grants to EMS providers

Cities and townships might soon be able to make grants to first responders, just as they are able to do now for hospitals.

Rep. Carolyn McElfattrick (R-Deer River) sponsors HF2861 that would allow local governments to make grants to emergency medical services agencies that serve their communities. The grants would have to be authorized by the local town board or city council.

"This is not a mandate. This is an option for our local governments," she said, adding that the need to contribute money to first responders is a concern for many Greater Minnesota communities.

The House passed the bill 113-14. It now awaits actions by the full Senate. Sen. Tom Saxhaug (DFL-Grand Rapids) is the Senate sponsor.

McElfattrick said she knew of no organized opposition to the bill. Still, some members expressed concern that public grant money could end up in the hands of private organizations.

"The grant is not free money. The grant is taxpayer money, and is that an appropriate use of taxpayer money?" said Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Savage).

— N. BUSSE

Met Council staggered terms

**Vetoed
by
the
governor**

A plan to stagger the terms of Metropolitan Council members has been nixed by Gov. Mark Dayton.

The council is a regional planning agency serving the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The governor appoints its members, and their terms are "coterminous," meaning they end at the same time. Dayton vetoed a bill that would have allowed eight of the council's 17 members to begin and end their terms two years after a change in gubernatorial administrations.

The bill's supporters say the ability to replace all the members at once makes the council less effective and more dependent on staff. They argue staggered terms would

provide for greater institutional knowledge to be retained between gubernatorial transitions.

In his veto message, Dayton said the current arrangement has worked well. He quoted his predecessor, former Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who vetoed a similar measure in 2008. Pawlenty wrote that the council's current structure "was the result of reforms intended to increase Metropolitan Council accountability."

A January 2011 report on metropolitan transit governance from the Office of the Legislative Auditor recommended staggered terms for the council. Staggered terms have also been proposed by the Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government.

The measure had bipartisan support among lawmakers, but the council opposed it.

Rep. Peggy Scott (R-Andover) and Sen. Benjamin Kruse (R-Brooklyn Park) are the sponsors.

HF2404/SF2014*/CH158

— N. BUSSE

Public Safety

Immigrant information sharing

Supporters say a bill passed by the House would help make things safer for everyone, while opponents believe it could result in profiling of certain citizens.

Sponsored by Rep. Bob Barrett (R-Shafer), HF358 would prevent local units of government from prohibiting or restricting their employees from sharing immigration data with federal authorities.

"Certainly, one thing we can take away from the tragic events of the last 10 years, specifically Sept. 11, 2001, is that communication between the different branches of government is critically important to the security of our citizens, and lack of communication between jurisdictions can result in tragedy," Barrett said.

Passed 77-52 by the House April 18, the bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Sean Nienow (R-Cambridge) is the sponsor.

Barrett said the bill is not anti-immigrant. "This bill supports immigration that happens through the current legal process in our country that we've had in place for hundreds of years to support immigration to the United States."

He hopes to help law enforcement do their jobs "without being hampered by city

ordinances that conflict with our federal laws."

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul) said the bill has a number of problems, including it being an unfunded local mandate; it takes away local control; it subjects Minnesotans to arbitrary police stops; and it could open all sorts of legal action for people who say their rights to not be harassed have been violated.

"Opening up racial discrimination is not a far-fetched intended consequence of this kind of proposal," he said.

Countered Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Vernon Center), "To pull people over because of their skin color, there's nothing in here, no mandate or hint or suggestion that cops have to pull anybody over."

Rep. Debra Hilstrom (DFL-Brooklyn Center) said the bill is not just about law enforcement personnel. "This bill says you can't restrict any public employee from investigating anyone's immigration status, street worker, municipal liquor store employee. ... I thought we wanted our public employees to do the job we pay them to do, not spend their time on vigilante justice."

— M. COOK

County attorneys can carry guns

**Signed
by
the
governor**

County attorneys or assistant county attorneys can now carry a firearm on duty provided they have a state-issued permit to carry.

State statute previously prohibited local government employees, other than licensed peace officers, from carrying firearms.

Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Vernon Center), who sponsors the law with Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen (R-Alexandria), stressed the law is not a knee-jerk reaction to the Dec. 15, 2011, shooting of Cook County Attorney Tim Scannell by a defendant who was convicted of third-degree criminal sexual conduct. Supporters said the law is about personal safety, not courtroom security, and will, for example, let them carry a weapon in their vehicle or keep one in their office.

The law, effective April 10, 2012, one day after it was signed by Gov. Mark Dayton, does not supersede a judge's right to ban firearms from their courtroom or courtroom complex, nor does it prohibit a county attorney from restricting a assistant county attorney from carrying while on duty.

HF1829*/SF1648/CH171

— M. COOK

LIGHTING THE WAY

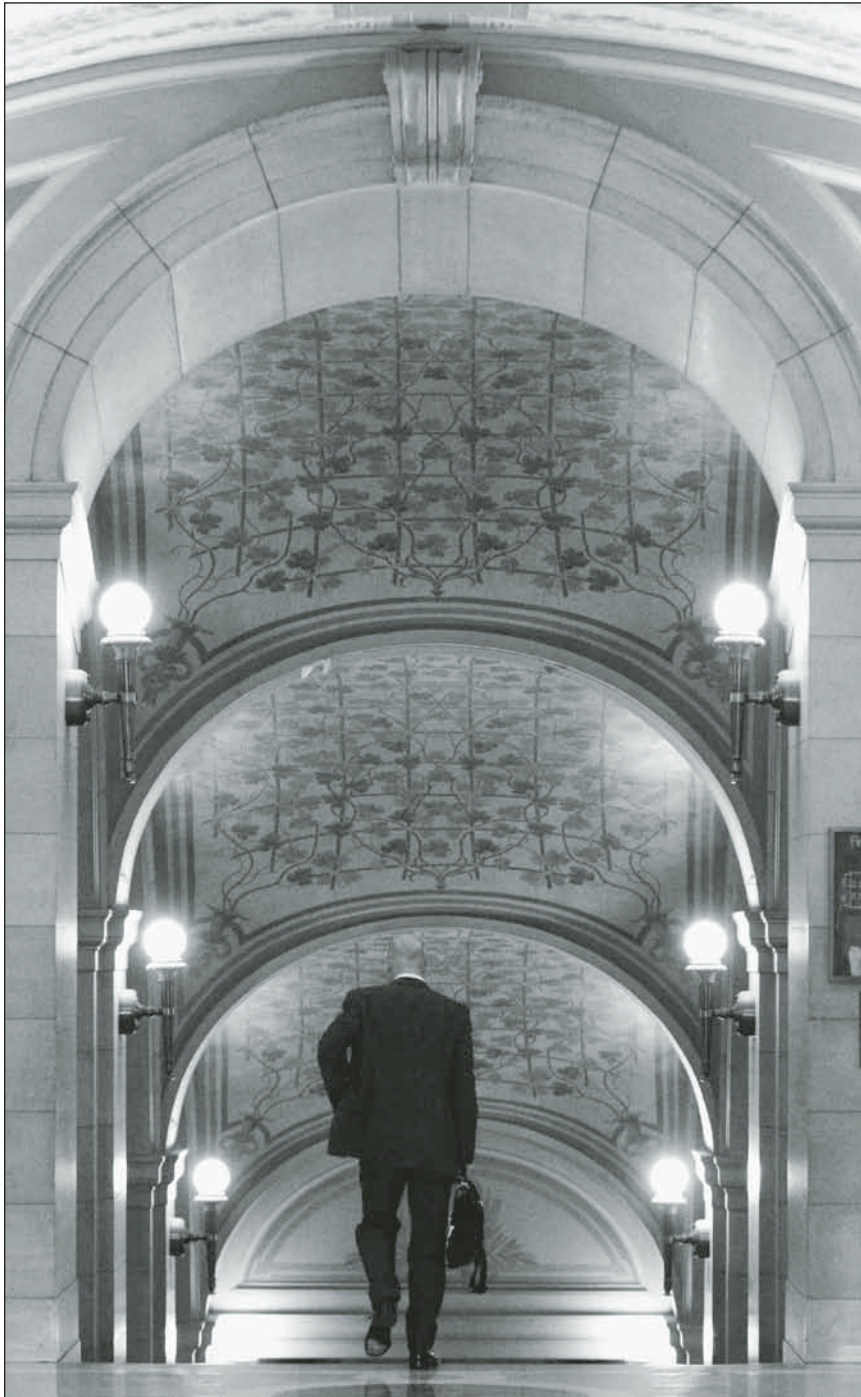


PHOTO BY PAUL BATTAGLIA

Lobbyist Ward Einess descends the stairs from the first floor of the Capitol April 17.

Civilian review authority changes

**Signed
by
the
governor**

An exemption the Civilian Review Authority in the state's largest city has had since 1991 will be no more.

Sponsored by Rep. Ron Shimanski (R-Silver Lake) and Sen. Scott Newman (R-Hutchinson), a new law will allow Minneapolis to give its law enforcement personnel the same rights and

privileges as other law enforcement agencies across the state.

Under current law, the Minneapolis Civilian Police Review Authority has a statutory exemption from compliance with the Peace Officer Discipline Procedures Act. The law will prohibit the authority from making binding findings of fact about police complaints and imposing discipline on peace officers, and, like other authorities,

could only make advisory recommendations. Signed April 5 by Gov. Mark Dayton, the law takes effect Aug. 1, 2012.

Shimanski said the law is all about due process. The Civilian Review Authority can now make findings of fact and determinations that become a part of an officer's record even if he or she is exonerated or the chief does not agree with the charges. The chief decides whether to impose discipline.

In the past year, the authority filed 53 complaints against officers, but only seven were acted upon by the police chief.

HF2409/SF1981*/CH156

— M. COOK

Firefighters memorial day change

**Signed
by
the
governor**

The date of the state's Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day will change to accommodate the dedication of a new memorial on the State Capitol grounds.

Sponsored by Rep. Doug Wardlow (R-Eagan) and Sen. Ted Daley (R-Eagan), a new law designates the last Sunday in September as the new memorial day. Previously, it was the first Sunday in October.

Wardlow said the change is needed to incorporate the unveiling of the state's new Minnesota Fire Service Foundation Memorial, which will be located on the Capitol Mall, near the Veterans Service Building. It is scheduled to be dedicated Sept. 30, 2012.

"This will allow family members of fallen firefighters to visit the dedication of the new memorial, and then one week later travel to Washington, D.C., if they so desire, to observe National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day," Wardlow said.

The memorial will honor the state's 194 firefighters who have died in the line of duty. A previously built memorial has existed for many years at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, but supporters successfully raised enough money to build a larger memorial at the Capitol.

HF2365/SF1492*/CH188

— N. BUSSE

Seeking to demonstrate silencers

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Federally licensed firearms dealers, manufacturers or importers will be permitted to possess silencers for the purpose of selling them or firearms tested with silencers for authorized activities.

The issue was brought forth by some federally licensed firearm dealers authorized to sell silencers; however, under current state statute, the possession and use of firearm silencers is prohibited, except for certain law enforcement and wildlife control activities. Therefore, salespeople were forced to sell a product that they could not demonstrate. There are an estimated 1,600 dealers in the state.

The law, sponsored by Rep. Mike Benson (R-Rochester) and Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen (R-Alexandria), is effective Aug. 1, 2012. It was neither officially supported nor opposed by law enforcement associations.

Although 37 states allow anyone to own suppressors, the law does not allow personal use of silencers. One dealer testified during the committee process that if he were to sell a silencer to someone for personal use he could face prison time, a hefty fine and the loss of his license to sell.

Among concerns expressed by opponents was that these silencers will be stolen from dealers and used for illegal purposes.

HF1816*/SF2125/CH194

— M. Cook

Buying junkers for parts, metal

Signed
by
the
governor

The number of people who can purchase vehicles at insurance auctions is expanding.

A new law allows new and used motor vehicle dealers who hold a scrap metal processor license to acquire a vehicle declared a total loss and sell both the vehicle parts and remaining scrap metal. Under current law, only dealers with a used parts vehicle dealer license can perform such activity.

According to the nonpartisan House Research Department, “a scrap metal processor license permits the licensee to engage in the business of acquiring operable vehicles for selling the metal for remelting, while a used vehicle parts dealer license permits the licensee to operate a business that acquires vehicles, dismantles it for parts, and sells both the parts and the remaining scrap materials.”

Supporters said the change will be beneficial for car insurance purchasers because theoretically they’d get more money for resale than if there is a more limited set of buyers.

Signed April 5 by Gov. Mark Dayton, the law takes effect Aug. 1, 2012.

Rep. Chris Swedzinski (R-Ghent) and Sen. John Howe (R-Red Wing) are the sponsors.
HF2736/SF2273*/CH163

— M. Cook

Harsher vulnerable adult penalties

Signed
by
the
governor

People who willingly neglect a vulnerable adult will face a more serious criminal charge. So will those who mistreat a child.

Sponsored by Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud) and Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove), a new law creates a felony crime for intentional deprivation of a vulnerable adult, such as with food, clothing, shelter or health care, when the caregiver “is reasonably able to make the necessary provisions.”

Supporters said the law comes in response to a number of cases where people were literally left to rot in their own filth and other abuse stories where the perpetrator could only be charged with gross misdemeanor.

Gottwalt said the law is a bipartisan collaboration of many interested parties, including the provider community, law enforcement and prosecutors.

The bill provides for three affirmative defenses:

- the person employed by a facility is unable to “reasonably make the necessary

provisions due to inadequate staffing levels, inadequate supervision, or institutional policies”;

- the defendant operates or manages a facility and did not knowingly or intentionally permit an employee to permit the criminal act; and
- where the caregiver “was acting reasonably and necessarily to provide care to another identified vulnerable adult.”

Additionally, the law reduces the level of harm required for a felony offense for child mistreatment by replacing “substantial bodily harm” in statute with “demonstrable bodily harm.”

The provision comes from HF2220/SF1725, sponsored by Rep. Jeanne Poppe (DFL-Austin) and Sen. Dan Sparks (DFL-Austin), which is based on a 2011 Mower County case where a 5-year-old child was chained to the slats of his crib every evening. The parents could only be charged with a gross misdemeanor.

Because there wasn’t substantial bodily harm, only demonstrable bodily harm — any harm that can be observed by another person — could be used in the charging.

Signed April 18 by Gov. Mark Dayton, the law takes effect Aug. 1, 2012.

HF1945/SF1586*/CH175

— M. Cook



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Surrounded by legislators and interested parties, Gov. Mark Dayton signs a bill April 18 that will protect vulnerable adults.

Transportation

Design-build program extension

**Signed
by
the
governor**

A 2009 law established a pilot program for selecting and undertaking local transportation projects on the municipal state-aid street and county-state aid highway systems using a design-build contracting method.

A new law removes the Oct. 1, 2012, expiration date for the program so nine projects can be completed before the statutory authority expires. So far, one project is underway in Anoka County.

The law is effective April 19, 2012, one day after it was signed into law by Gov. Mark Dayton.

In a traditional design-bid-build process, an agency completes the plans and specifications and the contractor builds exactly what was designed. In the design-build process, the agency completes a portion of the plan, creates the necessary environmental documents and purchases the right-of-way before going out to bid. It's up to the design-build contractor to complete the final design and build the project.

Supporters said design-build benefits include singular responsibility through the engineering and construction phases of a project, cost savings and time savings. They say limiting the program to a handful of projects, as in the law, will provide information on what works well before opening it up for everyone to do this.

The law also:

- eliminates a council established to select projects for the program; transferring those duties to the Department of Transportation;
- expands MnDOT's oversight of the solicitation process;
- removes project distribution limits between the county and municipal systems; and
- eliminates an annual legislative report on the program.

Rep. Bruce Vogel (R-Willmar) and Sen. John Howe (R-Red Wing) sponsor the law.
HF2378/SF2131*/CH176

— M. Cook

Towing larger farm equipment

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Because farm equipment has increased in size, so must state statute governing its transport.

A new law, effective Aug. 1, 2012, will modify brake requirements for implements

of husbandry, so that the implement does not need to have brakes if it is part of a combination of vehicles and the towing vehicle's brake capacity meets state standards. It was signed April 18 by Gov. Mark Dayton.

"As farm equipment has grown larger and larger over the years, several of these pieces of equipment are technically not even legal to have on the highway. If they're over 24,000 pounds, they can't be there," said Rep. Dan Fabian (R-Roseau), who sponsors the law with Sen. John Howe (R-Red Wing). "I'm just trying to update laws that regulate farm machinery that's towed by either a farm tractor or a truck."

Fabian said the state patrol and the Department of Transportation support the law.

"If a farm implement dealer sells a piece of equipment that weighs over 12,000 pounds, they are required under current statute to pull that to the farm where they've sold it with a tractor," Fabian said. "This language updates it so they can tow it with their semi provided the semi tractor has the braking capacity to be able to stop the vehicle should it need to."

HF2775/SF2394*/CH172

— M. Cook

Restored pioneer vehicles titling

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Titles on cars and trucks from upwards of a century ago will more accurately reflect the age of the vehicle.

Signed April 18 by Gov. Mark Dayton, a new law will, in part, change the title application and type issued for the vehicle. It takes effect Aug. 1, 2012.

Brought forth by restorers, the law's intent is to create a titling process that allows for pre-1936 manufactured vehicles to have a pioneer plate and a title that says restored, rather than reconstructed, and have the proper vehicle identification numbers that are already stamped on the engine block.

Many of these cars are found in very poor condition and they take hundreds or thousands of hours and tens of thousands of dollars to restore.

According to Rep. Mike Benson (R-Rochester), who sponsors the law with Sen. Carla Nelson (R-Rochester), what happens now is when an owner seeks a new title they receive one saying the car is a reconstructed vehicle, it will have a Vehicle Identification Number that doesn't correspond to numbers previously on the vehicle and the year on the title will be the year the vehicle was restored, not its manufactured year.

For example, Benson said, a 1910 Buick with hundreds of hours and tens thousands of dollars invested, would come back as a 2010 Buick. That means far less value to the owner.
HF2239*/SF2202/CH195

— M. Cook

Vehicle plates, lien changes

**Signed
by
the
governor**

Auto dealers will be given extra flexibility when it comes to license plate and tab storage if they're using the optional computerized vehicle registration system, and they can help customers acquire a lien release.

Several years ago the auto dealers, deputy registrars and Driver and Vehicle Services Division in the Public Safety Department created a computerized vehicle registration system whereby the dealer and deputy registrar do the paperwork for the customer on a vehicle title. By using the optional system, the consumer receives their title usually within a week to 10 days.

However, the number of dealers using the system has reached a plateau. Among reasons cited by those not participating is state statute that requires the plating and stickering of cars at the time of sale. Supporters hope more dealers will join the system by removing the requirement that the vehicle plate and registration sticker be attached to the vehicle at the time of sale when using the CVR system. They believe this will allow dealers to have better control over their license plate and sticker inventory and in turn wanting them to be part of the CVR system.

This part of a new law, signed April 18, 2012, by Gov. Mark Dayton, is effective the next day.

Effective Aug. 1, 2012, the law also allows auto dealers to help customers more quickly get a lien release from a previous lien holder.

Currently, if a vehicle owner has fully paid their lien but cannot locate the hold to obtain a lien release, the person can obtain a lien release on liens at least seven years old by sending a certified letter to the lien holder. The letter then serves as evidence of an attempt to contact and can be used to obtain a clean title from the Department of Public Safety. The law allows dealers to obtain a lien release in the same manner on behalf of their customer.

Rep. Bruce Vogel (R-Willmar) and Sen. Al DeKruif (R-Madison Lake) sponsor the law.
HF2187*/SF1791/CH174

— M. Cook

Fixing the state icon

By one vote, State Capitol restoration funding bill fails on the House floor

By LEE ANN SCHUTZ

By one vote, funding for needed repairs to the State Capitol may have to wait.

Crumbling marble, flaking paint and outdated mechanical infrastructure are apparent throughout the 107-year-old building. But needing the support of a House super-majority, a bill that would commit \$221 million in bond proceeds to the project failed to garner enough “yes” votes. The April 19 vote was 80-50; however, capital investment bills must be approved by three-fifths of the body, or 81 votes.

Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker), chairman of the House Capital Investment Committee, sponsors HF2754. He said after years of commissions, studies and plans, it is time to “commit” to the renovations. Restoration would take place over a four-year period, with work limited to that “necessary to restoring building integrity and structural soundness,” according to the bill. Besides mechanical and electrical retrofits, new security would be implemented and there would be a telecommunications upgrade.

While supportive of the restoration, DFLers questioned the need to bond the complete project this year. They said that if the project cost could be staged over the years, it would leave money now to bond for other construction projects across the state.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul), a previous capital investment committee chair, said the amount needed to fund the project would directly affect

bonding for other infrastructure. She referred to the roughly \$250 million capital investment bill (HF2622) awaiting House action.

“(Howes) has made a wonderful case for this building, but we have the broader needs across the state. I would argue there is another whole set of needs, projects ready for construction right now that will support jobs.” She said support is there for the project, but she advocated for a larger overall bonding bill.

When questioned about the future of that bill, Howes wouldn’t commit to a time

when the bill would be considered on the floor, but said it would be soon. He opted to commit the money for the complete Capitol project now because it will, in the long run, save taxpayers money. He said, however, that bonding could be part of end-of-session negotiations with the governor.

Howes said that if the project is only partially funded and money runs out then “scaffolding has to be taken down and workers have to leave the project and wait until the money is there. We get the best price if it is fully funded.”

He said this is a bill the governor supports.

“What I’ve learned is to have patience, keep moving forward, keep moving hard. When the governor signs this bill, in a very short time people will be going to work — the architects and engineers. By fully funding it we get a guaranteed price, instead of nickel-and-diming it. If we can’t commit to this, maybe we can’t commit to nothing.”

House Minority Leader Paul Thissen (DFL-Mpls) called Howes’ approach putting the Capitol (cart) before the horse. He called the bill “political theater,” and said a jobs bill put forward by the Democrats includes funding not only for the Capitol, but other statewide projects. He called it “robust,” rather than a piecemeal approach that the Republicans were taking.

He said any bonding bill needs bipartisan support, and that “going it alone is not a recipe for success.”

The bill’s companion, SF2531, sponsored by Sen. Carla Nelson (R-Rochester), awaits action by the Senate Capital Investment Committee. 🏛️



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

To illustrate the need for repairs, Rep. Dean Urdahl holds up a stone scroll that fell off the State Capitol. The House failed to pass a bill April 19 that would provide \$221 million to restore the building.

Education funding champion

Dittrich says serving was 'just the perfect pinnacle experience'

By ERIN SCHMIDTKE

When Rep. Denise Dittrich (DFL-Champlin) entered the House eight years ago, she had a set of goals in mind. Now, after advocating for increased education funding and an agenda to support small businesses, she is stepping down.

Dittrich's reasons for leaving are both professional and personal. Her youngest son will graduate from high school this year, leaving her and her husband, Allen, empty nesters.

"It was just the perfect pinnacle experience where someone else can come in and also see things anew, hear things anew and do different things and leave their own legacy," Dittrich said.

For years, Dittrich has kept busy with education finance, a longtime passion of hers. As a parent of three boys in the Anoka-Hennepin School District, which she also attended as a student, Dittrich immersed herself in school funding. She took classes on the subject and was later elected to the school board.

She began to notice the district only received a fraction of the compensatory aid of other districts, which is based on district size and the number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunches. Dittrich's work to secure that funding for the district took her from the school board to the House in 2004.

"I remember being on the House floor and thinking, 'Wow, this is an issue I have worked on for almost 10 years now,'" Dittrich said. Following efforts by her and other supporters, the district's compensatory aid has tripled since 2005.

Not content with increasing funding for only her home district, Dittrich has also spent her time in

office working to change the way the state manages its school trust lands. She learned that Minnesota received millions of acres of land from the federal government when it became a state, with the requirement that the land be leased, sold or used to fund education. She believes that the state has missed opportunities to maximize profit from the land.

"I had always dreamed before I got here, in the previous 10 years, that we need a stable, long-term predictable funding source for education, so people can look at this Legislature and know they're going to get that every single year," Dittrich said. She believes that source could come from the trust lands.

Dittrich served as the chairwoman of the

School Trust Land Oversight Committee in 2009 and co-sponsors a bill this session, HF2244, which would transfer the responsibility of managing the land from the DNR to a separate entity established by the Legislature. A conference committee is in the process of working out an agreement.

Throughout her time as a lawmaker, Dittrich has tried to represent her district on a nonpartisan level. That promise she made to constituents has motivated her as a politician.

"That I am extremely proud of, and that's more of a personal thing for me to walk away with that integrity," she said.

Her effort to be nonpartisan extended to another priority: economic growth. In 2010, along with Rep. Keith Downey (R-Edina) and former Rep. Maria Ruud (DFL-Minnetonka), she formed a small business caucus that focused on improving the state's business climate.

"We made it bipartisan, we developed it to be results-oriented and we said that we were going to be collaborative. And we did that," she said.

The caucus saw a series of bills passed, including the Angel Investor Tax Credit, which provides a 25 percent tax credit for investments in qualified small high-tech businesses. The caucus also successfully brought forth measures that would streamline business permits, study business regulations in the Midwest and support programs facilitating use of renewable energy in businesses.

Throughout her eight years in office, Dittrich has noticed an increased focus on accountability and reform in the legislative process. To help navigate through state politics, Dittrich advises her successor to find a mentor. She herself found one in Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington). She also believes that political effectiveness requires work.

"Do your own research. Don't take everything at face value and just nod your head and say, 'OK, thank you very much for that report.' The job requires homework," she said.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Denise Dittrich is leaving the House after eight years. She has been an advocate for education funding and small business.

Complicated road to the Senate

Koenen wins one Senate seat, but hopes to switch to another

By **LEE ANN SCHUTZ**

Several House members are planning a run this fall for the Senate. But none has a more complicated road for a seat than former Rep. Lyle Koenen (DFL-Clara City).

Because redistricting paired him with Rep. Andrew Falk (DFL-Murdock), Koenen, a five-term House member, opted to run for the Senate seat that opened when Sen. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) passed away.

Koenen won the April 10 special election, and while he was sworn-in April 18 to serve out Kubly's term, his future in the Senate remains in question.

At the recent Senate District 17 convention, he and another candidate went through a

grueling four rounds of balloting before delegates opted for no endorsement, triggering an August primary to determine the district's DFL candidate. If Koenen wins the primary, he will be on the November ballot.

His trek to the Senate actually began before redistricting after the 2000 census. He was serving as the Chippewa County DFL chairman, when he was prompted to run against Republican incumbent Charlie Berg. "No one was running, and I was asked at the last minute — just to get my name out," he said.

He was victorious in the 2002 election, and since then has represented an area that has experienced radical change — with district counties seeing some of the greatest population declines in the state. But Koenen says that doesn't mean the needs are any less or should be ignored.

"Let's take a small town that is losing population, they are still Minnesotans, and I believe they need the basic infrastructure — water, sanitary sewer. So I believe the state should be living up to its responsibilities there," he said. A bonding bill is critical for many Greater Minnesota communities because it affords them the chance to repair and replace aging infrastructure, he said.

Having served many years on House taxes committees, he has seen the changes to local government aid, leaving some tax-poor communities strapped.

"The LGA (local government aid) system was set up based on need, and if the system is working properly, they should be getting their portion of

LGA," he said. If re-elected to the Senate, Koenen would like to continue to focus on the area of taxes. "My goal is that the tax system be fair, so that it doesn't overburden working people."

A big part of the county tax levy comes from farmers, he said. "So anything we can do to level out the county aid, and for the state to pick up its fair share would in turn benefit farmers."

Koenen said a continuing problem in rural areas is job creation, so that young people can stay in their home communities. He believes addressing the problem begins with increasing education opportunities.

"One of the most important things I would like to see happen in our part of the state is more good paying jobs, so our young people don't have to leave. That's the No. 1 thing." He praised the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system campuses and its program offerings. "MnSCU students tend to stay in Minnesota," he said.

But for good jobs to take root, the area will need faster and more reliable Internet access along with road improvements.

"If you take a look at the state and where the four-lane roads are, there is a big void in the southwestern part of the state." He added that many roads need to be brought up to safety standards as they are not able to carry heavy loads.

In the end, however, it all comes back to sustaining farming and farm-related industries, which are the economic lifeblood of western Minnesota, he said.

Koenen does have regrets about leaving the House.

"Personally I'd be just as happy serving in the House. I have quite a bit of seniority here. In the Senate, however, there are fewer members, and there's a little bit more opportunity for me to inject myself into what's going on."

He said Kubly's shoes are big ones to fill. "He was always a good example of how a legislator should act. Nobody can replace him." 🐼



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Former Rep. Lyle Koenen won an April 10 special election to fill a Senate seat. He'll need to win two more elections to keep the seat.

Putting family first

Kriesel steps down after a brief but eventful first term

By Nick Busse

In just one term, Rep. John Kriesel (R-Cottage Grove), a decorated Iraq War veteran, made a name for himself as an outspoken, independent and popular young legislator. Kriesel knows he could probably have a future in politics if he wanted it — and he does.

But he also knows that some things are more important, namely his wife Katie, and his sons Broden and Elijah. It's for his family and he has decided not to seek re-election.

"I love this place, I love this job. But my family really needed me to be at home more — my kids especially," he said.

Kriesel certainly isn't the first lawmaker to step down for family reasons. But his decision might be better appreciated in the context of how much family time he's already sacrificed.

Kriesel missed two years of his kids' lives — first when his National Guard unit was deployed to Iraq, and then when he was

resigned to a hospital bed recovering from a roadside bomb attack that took both of his legs. His family would visit him in the hospital, but he said it wasn't the same.

"It really hit me, I think, within the last few months. I've been looking at pictures and videos my wife sent when I was deployed, like them singing songs to me. Nothing will ever get those years back; those are gone," he said.

The schedule of a "part time" lawmaker is often full. Kriesel has found that during session and even during the legislative interim, he's often unable to spend enough time with his family. Moreover, Kriesel said his wife basically put her career on hold to let him chase his dreams. He said it's time for him to step up and be there for her now.

"My wife has been so amazing throughout this, and just has put her life on hold," he said.

During his time in office, it was Kriesel's common-sense, "regular guy" approach to legislating that made him stand out.

A moderate Republican, Kriesel showed a willingness to break rank with his party when necessary to vote his conscience. He took populist stances on issues like fireworks sales, expanding gambling and the proposed new stadium for the Minnesota Vikings. He also made a now-famous speech on the House floor denouncing the proposed constitutional ban on gay marriage.

That speech got him in trouble with some of his own supporters, but Kriesel wasn't fazed. He thinks there's too much partisanship in the Legislature, and said legislators ought to focus on staying true to their personal beliefs and representing their constituents.

He offers this bit of advice to the person who takes his seat next session: "Don't be afraid to stand up for what you believe in. There's always going to be the temptation to go with the flow. And you know, if you vote with your heart, you're never wrong," he said.

Kriesel is proud of his service in the Legislature, and said he's loved every day of it. He thinks of himself as ordinary, and so feels privileged to have had a say in how the state is run. But he has found certain things frustrating too.

Kriesel said Republicans and Democrats don't spend enough time together on a personal basis, getting to know each other and establishing the kinds of relationships that would be helpful in passing difficult legislation. He said establishing the kind of trust that's needed at the Capitol could start with simple conversations.

"I wish that they had a bar in the basement. As crazy as that sounds, that would be the one thing that would foster a lot of bipartisanship," he said. "Have a beer with someone from the other side of the aisle. Talk. You learn about what you have in common, and that's where you need to start with everything, not just focus on differences."

Kriesel plans to keep his full-time job doing marketing for the Minnesota National Guard. But what's really "next" for Kriesel is helping his sons with their baseball teams, teaching them how to fish and doing "the stuff that dads are supposed to do." 🐟



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. John Kriesel showed a willingness to break rank with his party when necessary to vote his conscience.

Educator, lawmaker, advocate, mom

Slawik prepares to leave on a high note for her key issue: early childhood

By Nick Busse

When Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood) first took office, she was eight months pregnant with her second child. Much of her life thereafter, both inside and outside the House chamber, has revolved around children.

“My specialty became early childhood. Part of it was having my daughter in my first term, and the other part was it’s an intense interest of mine,” Slawik said.

Her seven non-consecutive terms in the Legislature have been marked by the dual struggles — and rewards — of a single mom raising two kids and a hard-working policymaker working diligently on early childhood issues. For a while, those two responsibilities went hand-in-hand.

Slawik’s children campaigned with her and marched with her every year in the local parade. They ran around on the House floor and became frequent customers at “Ulcer Gulch” — the affectionate moniker given to the Capitol’s second-floor snack food market.

“In many ways, this is a great working mom job, because you’re working part of the year and have the rest of the year off. And so for my kids growing up, it really worked great,” she said.

Today, Slawik’s life and career are at a crossroads. With her son Sean in college and daughter Tori set to join him, Slawik’s obligations to her family are changing. Her kids need less of her time and more of her financial support. She needs to focus more on her private career.

“It’s time for me to get a job that pays better, so I can contribute more to their college expenses,” she said.

She’s happy to be able to leave the House at a time when many exciting things are happening in the area of early childhood policy.

Several key measures that Slawik

spent years working toward have recently been put into effect, including creation of an Office of Early Learning within the Education Department; an expansion of the child care quality rating system; and the state’s \$45 million Race to the Top grant for early childhood funding.

“Everything has sort of come together, and that’s been very gratifying to watch,” she said.

Slawik served four years as chairwoman of the House Early Childhood Finance and Policy Division — something she calls “a wonderful experience” and the highlight of her legislative career. One of the things she’ll miss the most is the opportunity to work with like-minded advocates, parents, experts and policymakers.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Rep. Nora Slawik said the highlight of her career was serving as chairwomen of House Early Childhood Finance and Policy Division.

“I’ll miss the work on early childhood and the variety of people I get to work with,” she said. “I’ll definitely miss the relationships a lot.”

Slawik said the Legislature has become more partisan over the years. She considers herself a moderate and worries that other moderates, both DFL and Republican, are leaving the House.

“Folks are either really liberal or really conservative,” she said.

The tone has even changed among her constituents, she said. As she’s out campaigning and door-knocking, Slawik sees more people are now divided along party lines. She blames a lack of focus on priorities at the Capitol.

“I think it’s really unfortunate that legislators and those who will be running this summer have to talk about issues like voter ID and these constitutional amendments. I came here to talk about education and health care and jobs and very basic issues, and the conversation has really changed,” she said.

Slawik currently teaches a fall class at the University of Minnesota on, appropriately, early childhood education policy. It’s been tough to maintain a career outside the Legislature — something Slawik said has become a common problem for legislators in a certain age group.

“We tend to now be getting either people that are really young or people that are retired. Because those folks that are in their working years and raising family years, 30s and 40s, it’s very difficult on their families,” she said.

Before coming to the Legislature, she worked for nonprofits like the Boy Scouts of America and the United Way. She plans to return to the nonprofit sector when her legislative career is over. Though she won’t get to vote on bills anymore, she basically hopes to continue the same work she’s been doing as a lawmaker.

“I hope to just build on my work here and go back into the community and do good work,” she said. 🙏

GOVERNOR'S DESK

JANUARY 24 - APRIL 18, 2012

CHAPTERS 118 - 195

Tracking new laws, vetoes

Once a bill passes the House and Senate in identical form, it is sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill:

- sign the bill and it will become law;
- veto the bill;
- line-item veto individual items within an appropriations bill; or
- do nothing, which can have two different effects.

The timing of these actions is as important as the actions themselves.

In the second year of the biennium, (even-numbered years) a bill passed by the Legislature and presented to the governor before the final three days of the session will become law unless the governor vetoes it by returning it to the Legislature within three days. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

The governor normally signs the bills and files them with the secretary of state, but his or her signature is not required. If a bill is passed during the last three days of session, the governor has a longer time to act. He or she must sign and deposit it with the secretary of state within 14 days after the Legislature adjourns "sine die." If the governor does not sign a bill within this time frame, it will not become law — an action known as a "pocket veto." The governor is not required to provide a reason for the veto.

Only on appropriations bills can the governor exercise the line-item veto authority. This allows the governor to eliminate the appropriation items to which he or she objects. With the exception of pocket vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill.

Here, too, the timetable is three days after the governor receives the bill.

Policy items contained in appropriation bills may not be line-item vetoed. In order to veto such an item, the governor is required to veto the entire bill.

A two-thirds vote of the members in each house is needed to override a veto. But because only the governor can call a special session of the Legislature, anything vetoed after the Legislature adjourns is history — at least until the next year.

The governor's veto authority is outlined in the Minnesota Constitution (Article IV, Section 23).

More information is available on the governor's Web site (www.governor.state.mn.us). Select the "Legislation" link.

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	Bill that passed	Companion bill	Description	Signed	Vetoed
CH118	SF149	HF211	Liability limits modified for tort claims against the state and political subdivisions, conciliation court claims regulated, right of appeal provided on class action orders, statute of limitations on claims modified, prejudgment interest modified, attorney fees regulated, and cause of action for sex trafficking violations provided.		2/10/12
CH119	SF373	HF654	Limitation period reduced for bringing certain actions.		2/10/12
CH120	SF429	HF747	Attorney fee relation to damages awarded factor provided.		2/10/12
CH121	SF530	HF770	Interest on verdicts, awards, and judgments regulated.		2/10/12
CH122	HF1770	SF1493	Teacher candidates required to pass basic skills exam.	2/22/12	
CH123	HF2394	SF1994	Minnesota sex offender program; community notification required when a person is released from the program.	2/23/12	
CH124	HF1926	SF1527	Certification provided for good manufacturing practices for commercial feed and feed ingredients, voluntary certification fees authorized, rule provisions relating to animal feed modified, and money appropriated.	3/01/12	
CH125	HF1585	SF1322	Minnesota State High School League; time period reduced for good faith effort before interscholastic conference membership arrangement.	3/01/12	
CH126	HF1467	SF1357	Firearms; public official authority to disarm individuals at any time clarified and delimited, law clarified on use of force in defense of home and person, Minnesota's self-defense and defense of home laws codified and extended, common law duty to retreat in cases of self-defense outside the home eliminated, boundaries of dwelling expanded for purposes of self-defense, presumption created in the case of a person entering a dwelling or occupied vehicle by stealth or force, rights available extended to a person in that person's dwelling to a person defending against unlawful entry of that person's occupied vehicle, and recognition provided by Minnesota of other states' permits to carry a pistol within and under the laws of Minnesota.		3/5/12
CH127	SF1371	HF1468	Forfeited firearm sale by law enforcement agencies authorized to federally licensed firearms dealers.	3/5/12	
CH128	SF1240	HF1535	DWI, off-highway vehicle, drive-by shooting, designated offense, and controlled substance forfeiture laws changes made to provide more uniformity; monetary cap raised on the value of property forfeitures that may be adjudicated in conciliation court; forfeited property prohibited from being sold to prosecuting authorities or persons related to prosecuting authorities; and general criminal code forfeiture law, necessity of conviction, and burden of proof clarified.	3/08/12	
CH129	SF134	HF212	Public employee definition modified.		3/08/12
CH130	SF1213	HF1484	Adult education tracking system modified.	3/08/12	
CH131	SF1183	HF032	State and local government tort liability limits restored to pre-2008 levels, and state and local government contracts that require contractors to provide liability insurance or other security in excess of those limits prohibited.	3/15/12	
CH132	HF1515	SF1272	Late fee provisions modified, and provisions clarified relating to eviction from property subject to foreclosure.	3/20/12	
CH133	HF1560	SF993	Office of Administrative Hearings disposition of contested case hearings provided.		3/20/12
CH134	HF2152	SF1739	Real estate licensee responsibility specified for property management activities on real property owned by the licensee or by an entity in which the licensee has an ownership interest.	3/20/12	

CH	Bill that passed	Companion bill	Description	Signed	Vetoed
CH135	HF1738	SF1450	Municipality detachment provided.	3/20/12	
CH136	HF300	SF1160	Early childhood development screening notice modified.	3/26/12	
CH137	HF392	SF992	School bus safety and standards provisions modified.	3/29/12	
CH138	HF2376	SF1971	School food service fund equipment purchase approval process simplified.	3/29/12	
CH139	HF1524	SF1932	Substitute principal continuing education requirements clarified.	3/29/12	
CH140	HF545	SF1600	State budget document required to include federal contingency planning.		3/29/12
CH141	SF1542	HF2441	Defensive driving refresher course requirements modified.	3/30/12	
CH142	SF1735	HF2227	State bank closures for holidays clarified, state bank lending limits changed to comply with federal law, and obsolete language repealed relating to deposits payable on demand.	3/30/12	
CH143	HF382	SF352	Receiverships, assignments for the benefit of creditors, and nonprofit corporation statutes amended; and Uniform Disclaimer of Property Interests Act changed, updated, and clarified.	3/30/12	
CH144	HF2078	SF1990	Nonpublic pupil textbook aid expanded.	3/30/12	
CH145	HF2291	SF2346	Adult basic education; process created for contact hours lost due to a service disruption.	3/30/12	
CH146	SF1917	HF2293	School districts; ability to use prone restraints extended to one additional year, and data collection and reporting required.	4/2/12	
CH147	HF2793	SF2426	Vehicle combination allowed to transport property and equipment.	3/30/12	
CH148	HF2253	SF1861	Out-of-state residential mental health treatment allowed for children who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing and who use American Sign Language as their first language.	4/2/12	
CH149	HF1903	SF1814	Honor guard stipends preference modified.	4/2/12	
CH150	SF1567	HF2095	Environmental permitting efficiency provided, environmental review requirements modified, and money appropriated.	4/2/12	
CH151	HF1384	SF1084	Charitable or religious organization transfers excluded from the fraudulent transfers act.	4/3/12	
CH152	HF2676	SF2330	Abortion; grant eligibility modified for abortion alternative programs.	4/4/12	
CH153	SF2297	HF1899	Jacob's law established, law enforcement notification required to social services if a child is neglected or abused outside the home, and parental rights under custody orders amended to include police reports on minor children.	4/4/12	
CH154	HF2083	SF2492	Omnibus K-12 bill.		4/5/12
CH155	SF2084	HF2415	Fugitive apprehension unit authorized to apply for search warrants, commissioner directed to implement a gardening program at state correctional facilities, selection criteria narrowed for challenge incarceration program, and victim notification permitted to include electronic and written notification.	4/4/12	
CH156	SF1981	HF2409	Police civilian review uniform authority procedures provided.	4/5/12	
CH157	SF2069	HF2544	Travel insurance offer and dissemination regulated.	4/4/12	
CH158	SF2014	HF2404	Metropolitan Council staggered, four-year terms provided for members.		4/5/12
CH159	SF1993	HF2354	Plumbing requirements modified relating to sump pumps and drain tiles.	4/4/12	
CH160	SF1793	HF1998	Health plan company definition modified.	4/5/12	
CH161	SF1860	HF2316	Solid waste definition modified to exempt highway construction, improvement, or repair activities.	4/5/12	
CH162	SF1934	HF2342	Township mutual fire insurance company combination policies regulated.	4/5/12	
CH163	SF2273	HF2736	Junked motor vehicle buyer class eligibility expanded, and commissioner of public safety directed to make changes to Minnesota Rules.	4/5/12	
CH164	SF1809	HF2237	Hospital community benefit programs and health maintenance organization collaboration plans; evidence-based strategy requirements removed.	4/5/12	
CH165	HF1992	SF1687	Motor carrier contract indemnity provisions prohibited.	4/5/12	
CH166	SF2173	HF2626	Automated drug distribution system authorized.	4/9/12	
CH168	SF1236	HF1418	Successor corporation asbestos-related liabilities limited.		4/9/12
CH169	SF1543	HF2060	Medical assistance coverage provided for community paramedic services.	4/9/12	
CH170	HF2216	SF1910	Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association; premium rate-setting process flexibility permitted.	4/9/12	
CH171	HF1829	SF1648	County attorneys and assistant county attorneys authorized to carry firearms on duty under the terms of a permit to carry.	4/9/12	
CH172	SF2394	HF2775	Towed implements of husbandry brake requirements amended.	4/18/12	
CH173	HF2333	SF1870	Motor fuel theft specifically included in the theft crime, and permissive inference created.	4/18/12	
CH174	HF2187	SF1791	Motor vehicle registration plate and sticker provisions amended, and dealer allowed to obtain cancellation of lien more than seven years old.	4/18/12	
CH175	SF1586	HF1945	Criminal neglect of vulnerable adult penalty modified.	4/18/12	
CH176	SF2131	HF2378	Design-build projects approved under pilot program completion authorized.	4/18/12	
CH177	SF1621	HF2097	Child care accreditation provisions modified.	4/18/12	
CH178	SF2184	HF2763	Time share interests registration provided.	4/18/12	
CH179	SF1815	HF1989	Incumbent electric transmission owner rights established, and commission procedures established.	4/18/12	

CH	Bill that passed	Companion bill	Description	Signed	Vetoed
CH180	SF1553	HF1972	Dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistant guest license provisions modified.	4/18/12	
CH181	SF1626	HF2094	Volunteer dental services coverage provided for and regulated.	4/18/12	
CH182	SF1964	HF2263	Window cleaning safety measures implemented.	4/18/12	
CH183	SF2114	HF2476	Child support 20-year survival judgements provisions eliminated.	4/18/12	
CH184	SF1620	HF1833	Relocation assistance amount or denial hearing required.	4/18/12	
CH185	SF1875	HF2307	Guaranty association coverage written disclosure permitted when a policy is delivered, and access expanded to accident reports to include all parties involved.	4/18/12	
CH186	SF1599	HF2100	Veterans and spouses of a disabled or deceased veteran hiring and promotion preference by private employer permitted.	4/18/12	
CH187	SF2060	HF2770	Legislative enactments; erroneous, ambiguous, and omitted text and obsolete references corrected; redundant, conflicting, and superseded provisions removed; and miscellaneous corrections to laws, statutes, and rules made.	4/18/12	
CH188	SF1492	HF2365	Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day designated date changed.	4/18/12	
CH189	SF2360	HF2587	Health professional education loan forgiveness program requirements amended.	4/18/12	
CH192	SF1689	HF1416	Military affairs; nonpublic employees reemployment rights protections extended.	4/18/12	
CH193	HF2128	SF1876	Emergency medical personnel licensed.	4/18/12	
CH194	HF1816	SF2125	Federally licensed firearm importers, manufacturers, and dealers authorized to possess and sell firearm silencers to government agencies, the military, and other licensed firearms importers, manufacturers, and dealers.	4/18/12	
CH195	HF2239	SF2202	Motor vehicle titling and license plate requirements amended and clarified for pioneer vehicles.	4/18/12	

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

APRIL 16 - 19, 2012
HOUSE FILES 2999 - 3006

Monday, April 16

HF2999-Kelly (R)

Government Operations & Elections

New tribal-state compact negotiation and new forms of gambling authorized.

HF3000-Anderson, P. (R)

Transportation Policy & Finance

Logo sign program hours of operation criteria amended.

HF3001-Quam (R)

Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Policy & Finance

Federal lands transfer to the state required.

Tuesday, April 17

HF3002-Swedzinski (R)

Government Operations & Elections

Motor vehicle fuel sale restriction and criminalization prohibited by local government units.

Wednesday, April 18

HF3003-Fritz (DFL)

Government Operations & Elections

State correctional facilities fresh produce consumption local growers or distributors purchasing preference required.

Thursday, April 19

HF3004-Davnie (DFL)

Education Reform

Harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence in education prevention policies provided.

HF3005-Howes (R)

Health & Human Services Reform

Orthotics, prosthetics and pedorthics practice regulated and licensure required.

HF3006-Kahn (DFL)

Agriculture & Rural Development Policy & Finance

Food animal non-therapeutic use of antimicrobial drugs, and sale of food produced from animals administered antimicrobial drugs for non-therapeutic purposes prohibited.

Frequently called numbers

Area code 651

House Public Information Services

175 State Office Building 296-2146
Toll-free 800-657-3550

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House Index

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House Research

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G-17 Capitol 296-4791

Governor's Office

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Barry LaGrave

Editor/Assistant Director

Lee Ann Schutz

Assistant Editor

Mike Cook

Art & Production Coordinator

Paul Battaglia

Writers

Nick Busse, Bob Geiger, Susan Hegarty,
Erin Schmidtke

Chief Photographer

Paul Battaglia

Photographer

Andrew VonBank

Staff Assistants

Christy Novak, Samantha Langenbach

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MINNESOTA INDEX

Enjoying the outdoors

Number of state park and recreation areas in Minnesota.....	75
Combined acreage, as estimate.....	227,000
Year that Itasca State Park was established as the first state park.....	1891
Months in advance a state park reservation can be made	12
Cost of a 2012 year-round state park vehicle permit.....	\$25
Cost of an additional vehicle permit.....	\$18
Cost of a daily permit.....	\$5
Daily fee in 2012 for a standard campsite (modern bathrooms with showers) in a state park.....	\$12-22
Fee for a rustic campsite (primitive toilets, no showers).....	\$12
Approximate miles of hiking trails in the state	1,030
Miles of the Superior Hiking Trail.....	286
Backcountry campsites along the trail	89
Miles of horse-riding trails, as estimate, in Minnesota's state forests and state parks....	1,000
Miles of ATV trails in the state, as approximate.....	900
Number of multi-use state trails in state.....	24
Number of state water trails	32
Miles of mapped routes throughout the state, as approximate.....	4,400
Miles of Lake Superior Water Trail.....	155
Approximate number of miles of natural rivers and streams in Minnesota	69,200
Number of lakes in Minnesota that are 10 acres or greater in size.....	11,842
Acres of the state covered by lakes and deep water rivers.....	2,560,299
Annual sport fishing expenditures in Minnesota, as estimated in billions.....	\$1.58
Number of residents per boat in the state	6
Fishing piers and shore-fishing sites in Minnesota	340
Estimated number of bird species in Minnesota.....	420
Public wildlife areas in state	1,440
Millions of acres of habitat within these areas.....	1.29
Estimated number of golf courses in the state.....	400
Miles of snowmobile trails, as estimate, in the state	20,000

— M. Cook

Sources: Explore Minnesota Tourism; Department of Natural Resources; Superior Hiking Trail Association.