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# Perspectives

A Publication about the Minnesota State Senate

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**Senate '83:** fresh outlook on familiar problems

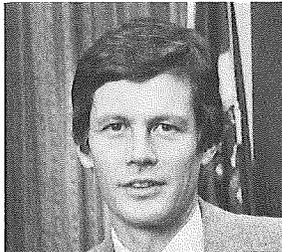
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## 1983 Senate Directory

## Perspectives

The January 1983 issue of *Perspectives* is designed to serve as an introduction to some of the people and issues that will be involved in the 73rd Session of the Minnesota Legislature. To that end, *Perspectives* offers brief profiles of the freshmen senators, the new minority leader and the 16 standing committees of the Senate. In addition, the back cover lists the capitol addresses and phone numbers of all 67 state senators. *Perspectives* was prepared by the Senate Public Information Office staff.

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The staff also covers legislative action for its weekly news summary, *Briefly*, which is printed during session. The office's publications and informational brochures are available free of charge to interested citizens.

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### On the cover:

Sister Michele McGurran, Chaplain of the Senate, leads the members in prayer during the opening day ceremony of the 73rd Legislative Session. Photo by Mark M. Nelson and Steve Senyk.

1983 Committee chairmen standing left to right: Senators Chmielewski, Dieterich, C.C. Peterson, Hughes, Nelson, Berglin, R.D. Moe, Willet, D.M. Moe, Schmitz, Lessard, Solon and Spear. Seated left to right: Senators Pehler, Vega, Merriam and D.J. Johnson. Not pictured, Senator Purfeerst



Photo by Mark M. Nelson

# Committees define objectives

by Karen L. Clark

With transition and change taking place throughout state government, the heart of the legislative process, the committee system, remains constant. The committee structure provides a stable framework for the careful consideration and discussion of legislation before the Senate. Yet, even the Senate committees must go through a process of change and evolution. New committee chairmen and vice chairmen have been named, a number of committees have had a redefinition of jurisdiction and all standing committees have had new members assigned. The following represents a brief characterization of what is in store for the 16 Senate Committees during the 1983 legislative session.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee will remain under the stewardship of Chairman Gene Merriam for the next legislative session. Of major importance, again this year, will be consideration of legislation designed to provide a mechanism for dealing with hazardous waste clean-up procedures. In addition, the committee will work on amendments to the 1980 Waste Management Act and, possibly, consider legislation setting an outstate water management policy similar to that established for the metro area last year. In the area of agricultural policies, committee members will devote hearings to the governor's

foreign trade proposals. Finally, there is a possibility committee members will discuss a proposal for entering into a compact with other states on low-level radioactive waste.

## Economic Development and Commerce

Sen. Sam Solon will take charge of the new Economic Development and Commerce Committee for the biennium. In addition to hearing issues traditionally covered by past Commerce Committees, such as banking, the panel will place an even greater emphasis on proposals designed to speed Minnesota's economic recovery. The maintenance of favorable business conditions, the spurring of economic development

through job creation and proposals for small businesses are top priorities for the newly structured committee.

## Education

The Education Committee will also have a new chairman. Sen. James Pehler has been named to oversee the maintenance of quality education throughout the state. Sen. Tom Nelson's Education Aids Subcommittee will be responsible for drafting the legislation setting the public education funding levels for the next biennium. Traditionally, the education aids bill is the largest component of the entire state budget.

## Elections and Ethics

The Elections and Ethics Committee will be chaired by Sen. Jerome Hughes, the new President of the Senate. The panel has no regularly scheduled meeting time; instead it will meet on an "on-call" basis as bills are referred to the committee. Possible proposals to come before the committee range from the reapportionment of the Metro Council districts to the discussion of issues arising out of the most recent election.

## Employment

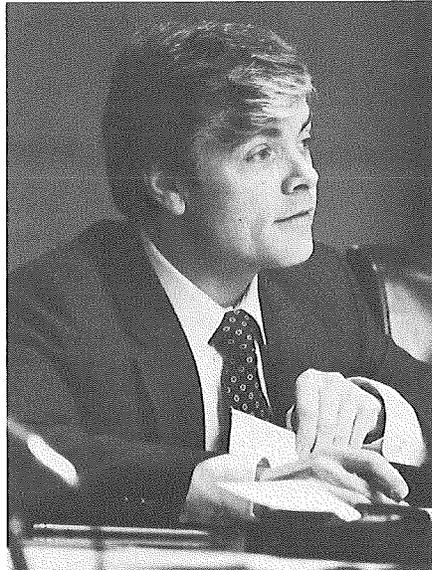
Workers' compensation and unemployment compensation will be the two main issues before the Senate Employment Committee. Sen. Florian Chmielewski will remain at the helm as committee members wrestle with these two volatile subjects. The panel must find a remedy for the \$400 million unemployment compensation fund deficit and reconcile the workers' compensation dilemma.

## Energy and Housing

The new chairman of the Energy and Housing Committee, Sen. Conrad Vega, foresees important developments in the areas of both energy and housing during the coming biennium. He cites the need for committee members to thoroughly examine, and draft, legislation that will be necessary to take advantage of federal housing funds used to help stimulate the economy. Vega also indicated that the committee will be looking at alternative energy sources such as peat and methane gas. The use of surplus agricultural products as an energy source will be a priority with the panel.

## Finance

The continued fiscal dilemma facing the state will be the focal point of discussions conducted by Sen. Gerald Willet's Finance Committee. Members of the committee are charged with developing the state's budget and will therefore be keeping a close watch on future revenue projections. With state funds in such short supply, budgets will be closely scrutinized during this budget setting legislative session.



Sen. Don Moe

## Governmental Operations

The jurisdiction of the Governmental Operations Committee has been altered to include the range of issues relating to public employees' pay and benefits, including public employee pension matters. In addition, the panel, directed by new chairman, Sen. Don Moe, will continue to hear all bills dealing with the operation and organization of state governmental departments and agencies, such as the proposed reorganization of the Commerce Department. Moe also indicated that confirmations of the various new gubernatorial appointments will occupy the committee's attention.

## Health and Human Services

Sen. Linda Berglin became the first woman to chair a Senate standing committee when she assumed that position with the Health and Human Services Committee. As with the other

policy committees, legislative proposals developed by the Health and Human Services Committee will be sharply circumscribed by the state's financial situation. The committee will, for instance, be working on changes to Rule 49, the nursing home reimbursement procedure, with the possibility of a complete revision. In addition, there will be continued discussion of welfare eligibility standards and of the legislation needed for compliance with federal standards. In the area of corrections, there will be more exploration of solutions to the need for a new or alternative women's correctional facility. Health cost containment proposals, suggestions from the Board on Aging and the question of whether home health agencies should be regulated are other items likely to come before the panel.

## Judiciary

For the first time in Senate history, the Judiciary Committee will be headed by a chairman who is not an attorney—Sen. Allan Spear. According to Spear, one of the most important items on the committee agenda for the session is the legislation necessary to implement the Intermediate Court of Appeals. Voters approved a constitutional amendment to establish the court, but the legislature must first enact the appropriate legislation. In addition, the panel will devote some time to the juvenile code as well as a wide range of other technical legal matters.

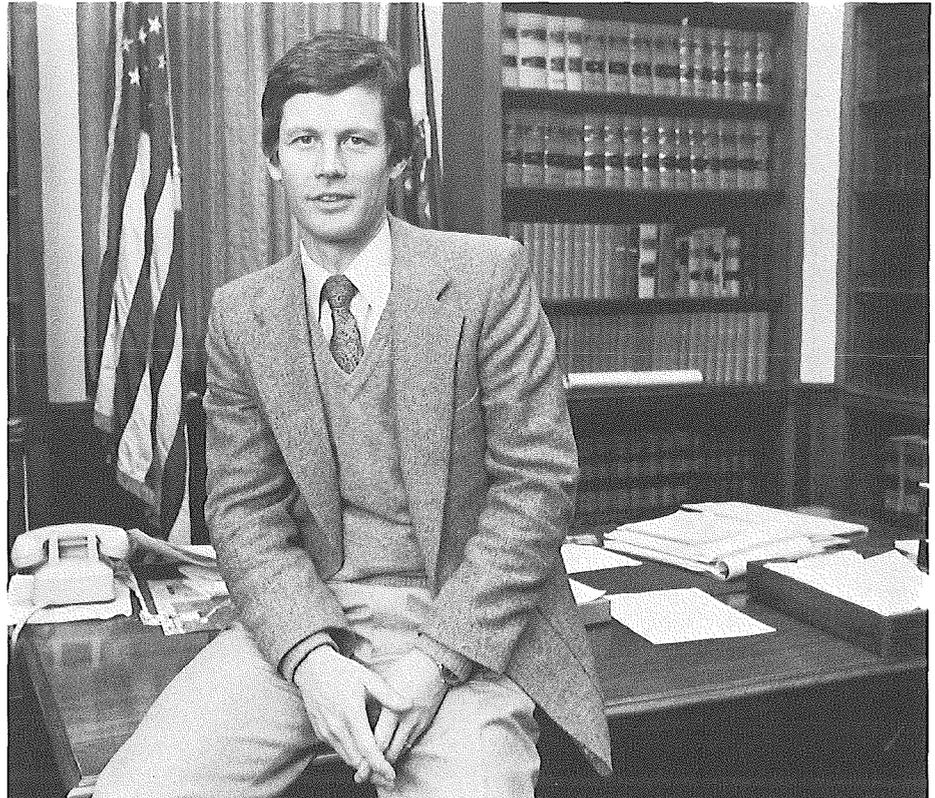
## Local and Urban Government

The new chairman for the Local and Urban Government Committee is Sen. Robert Schmitz. As in the past, the committee will hear issues bearing on local units of government including cities, urban towns, townships and counties. Schmitz has been meeting with representatives of the various local government associations in order to develop an agenda for the 1983 session.

One possible topic of discussion is the mandates imposed on the local units of government at both the state and federal level. The committee will be looking at possible modifications of those mandates in the future.

See Committees, page 15

# Ulland charts IR course



**Senate Minority Leader James Ulland**

**by Karen L. Clark**

When members of the DFL and the IR caucuses met after the November election, the first item of business for both groups was the filling of caucus leadership positions.

DFL'ers reelected Sen. Roger Moe majority leader and named Sen. William Luther assistant majority leader. In addition, the majority caucus chose Sen. Jerome Hughes to be the new President of the Senate and designated three majority whips: Senators Marilyn Lantry, Gregory Dahl and Tom Nelson.

For Independent Republicans, filling the position of minority leader was the top priority because outgoing minority leader Sen. Robert Ashbach chose not to run in 1982. At their first meeting, Nov. 5, IR caucus members elected Sen. James Ulland of Duluth as the minority leader for the coming legislative session. Ulland then set about the organization of the caucus

by naming four assistant minority leaders and a minority whip. Senators Darrel Peterson, Nancy Brataas, James Ramstad and Glen Taylor were named to the assistant minority leader posts and Sen. Ron Sieloff is the new minority whip.

Ulland, who teaches part-time at the School of Business and Economics at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, said the designation of the four assistant minority leaders reflects a "functional management" philosophy which emphasizes individual areas of expertise. He went on to indicate that though there are several successful management structures depending on circumstances and personnel, "I think the particular structure I am using fits this caucus and its personnel better than the other structures." For example, Brataas and Peterson will specialize in policy development and research. Taylor will be the assistant IR leader for administration and Ramstad will be responsible for communications.

On the broader question of the place of the minority caucus in the legislative process, Ulland said, "There is a classic role for the minority and that role is to support the proposals of the majority that are in the public interest and to oppose, and bring to public attention, those majority proposals that are not in the public interest." Consistent with the classical aspect of the minority is the responsibility to "critically review" the majority's proposals, to initiate constructive alternatives and, ultimately, to try and become the majority party, he said.

His role as caucus spokesman will be clear, he said, because of the concentration of DFL power in both legislative bodies and the governor's office. "I think the public will see a more classical minority, one that does critically review all proposals because the proposals are all going to be coming out of the majority party," Ulland said.

**See Ulland, page 15**



# Freshmen face new challenge

by Steve Senyk

When the Senate convened the 1983 legislative session, 21 members were sitting in the chamber for the first time. They, the freshmen senators, compose nearly one-third of the Senate body. As a group they will have an impact on the formation of state policy. Nine of the freshmen have served in the House of Representatives bringing with them the expertise and knowledge obtained while working within the realm of the legislative process. The others bring a variety of experiences and capabilities as diverse as the people and interests they were elected to represent.

Unquestionably, members of the legislature are taking office during a most difficult time. The '82 legislature recently solved a \$312 million

shortfall in the budget, marking the fourth time that a special session was required to balance the budget in the last two years. The tightened state budget is adversely affecting the operation of local units of government and school districts. Unemployment continues to be high as a result of the stifled economy and Minnesota businessmen are asking for improvements in the state's business climate. Legislators are feeling the pressure from citizens to put aside politicking and to form solutions to these and other problems confronting the state.

The attitudes, aspirations, experience and determination of the freshmen senators will be important factors in determining to what extent the '83 legislature will be successful in solving the state's problems.



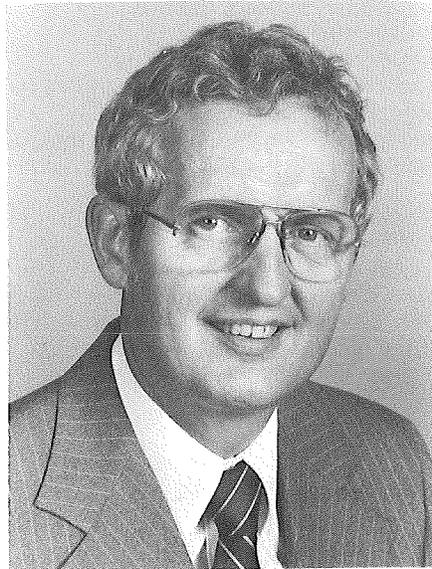
**Betty Adkins — DFL**  
**Age: 48**  
**Occupation: Housewife**  
**Home: St. Michael**

Having served as Deputy Clerk of Otsego Township, Adkins is familiar with the workings of local government, and she cites the independent operation of townships as her main legislative concern. As vice chairman of the Local and Urban Government Committee, Adkins wants to play an important role in examining state policy in light of its effects on townships.

Adkins said she is concerned about the authority of township officers. "They have been, in the past, limited in what they can do as township officers. That has changed in the last three years and I want to continue to see that change — to make the township officials more responsive to the people, to make them able to do things for the people that they can't now do without incorporating and becoming a city. As townships increase in population, more services are demanded of them and I just want to see that townships are able to provide those services."

Adkins is especially concerned about the state's fiscal stability and high unemployment. She feels those are the top legislative priorities for the legislature to concentrate on. She said she will carefully examine the effects of fiscal policy on local government, education and programs for senior citizens. Looking at ways to insure the

protection of agriculture land and quality education in Minnesota are also high on her priority list for the session.



**Don Anderson — IR**  
**Age: 48**  
**Occupation: Businessman**  
**Home: Wadena**

With 22 years of business experience, Don Anderson said he ran for office because "state government, more now than ever, needs well qualified people — especially with business experience."

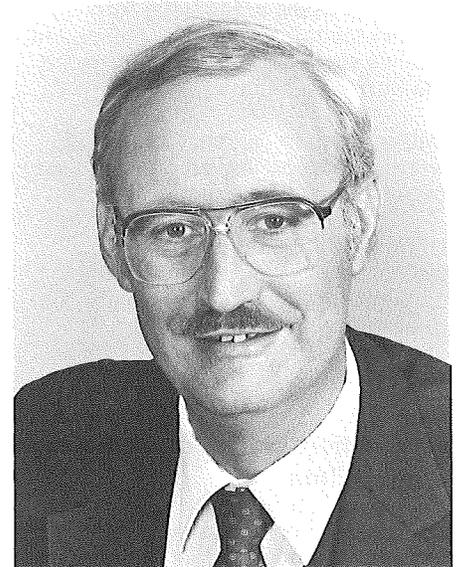
With that experience, Anderson said he hopes to contribute his insight into expanding the state's economy, revising workers' compensation, restructuring unemployment compensation benefits, and encouraging businesses to move to Minnesota by providing more favorable tax laws.

"I want to devote my energy toward changing the poor business climate in Minnesota. Most small businesses have cut back drastically on their employees, and with the cost of doing business in Minnesota, they don't intend to hire them back," he said.

Anderson also stresses the importance of putting agriculture back on its feet. "We must work with the people that feed us. They need a fair price. When agriculture is strong and healthy, the whole state of Minnesota will be strong and healthy."

After taking office in January,

Anderson said he would like to begin examining "a complete restructuring of state government." He added, "Over the past 50 years we have added a myriad of agencies and programs to state government to the point of overspending and overtaxing our citizens."



**Gary DeCramer — DFL**  
**Age: 38**  
**Occupation: Farmer and former college instructor**  
**Home: Ghent**

As a rural senator, Gary DeCramer emphasizes the importance of getting the farm economy back in gear. As vice chairman of the Transportation Committee, he feels the state must address a major problem confronting rural and urban citizens alike — rail line and highway improvements.

DeCramer said, "As our economy depends upon agriculture, the need for good roads, since many of the rail lines are gone, becomes more important. And whatever rail lines we have left, we have to work to maintain."

According to DeCramer, the state must look at increased dedicated funds for transportation.

Concerning agriculture, DeCramer indicated that the state must improve its efforts in marketing Minnesota's goods to improve farm prices. "We can do something on the state level to improve farm prices . . . there is a direction that the Dept. of Agriculture can take beyond the

regulatory responsibilities it has had in the past. And that direction is one of involvement in the marketing of Minnesota products. We've got to work with the producers of the commodity. What we're going after here is a cooperative marketing agreement between the states, and if that can be pulled off, it would change the whole course of what mid-America is about."

DeCramer also has other problems confronting his district. "My district borders on South Dakota and Iowa, and businesses are moving from Minnesota to those states. It is crucial that we stop that exodus and reward the businesses that remain."

DeCramer lists "drastic" reform of workers' compensation rates as a way to begin addressing that problem.

Other issues of importance to DeCramer are soil, water, wildlife conservation and the availability of quality education.

**Bill Diessner — DFL**  
**Age: 49**  
**Occupation: Doctor of medicine**  
**Home: Afton**

Bill Diessner is the first M.D. to serve in the Senate since 1941, and he hopes his personal experiences in the medical field will assist him in dealing with health care issues. Diessner will serve as the vice chairman of the Employment Committee, where one health-related issue — workers' compensation — will again be generating some controversy.

"I am very cost-effective conscious . . . I spent a couple years



**Sen. Bill Diessner**

pulling judges, lawyers, doctors and psychiatrists together and got some cost effective legislation as a mental health commitment act amendment," Diessner said.

Concerning the function of state programs, Diessner said, "The first objective has got to be good consequences; that the program should be producing good consequences and that those consequences are needed. If there is a program out there that isn't really needed, that's when major cuts must be made."

Diessner is concerned about insuring that the state will continue to provide quality education and that its property taxes will be "fair and equitable." He also indicated that he is concerned about environmental issues, such as the clean-up of illegally disposed hazardous waste.

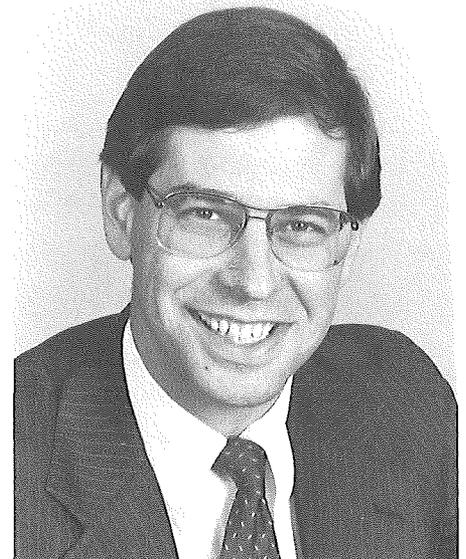
**Mike Freeman — DFL**  
**Age: 34**  
**Occupation: Attorney**  
**Home: Minneapolis**

Mike Freeman will be vice chairman of the Economic Development and Commerce Committee, a committee which has been renamed to reflect the emphasis on promoting economic development in the state. In that position, Freeman hopes to focus much of his effort in an area of concern to all — job creation.

"The principal job creation has been in small businesses, those of 50 people or less, and about 80 percent of the new jobs in the last 10 years has been created by small businesses, and I think we ought to look at that in terms of specific job creation programs," he said.

Freeman said that one problem that has had a negative impact on the business climate in Minnesota has been the criticism about the climate, and he said he believes that the Senate will have "some fresh air in January of '83 and perhaps some of this constant carping will be over." He added, "I don't think we enhance or improve our business climate by complaining about it excessively." He said he plans to meet with business leaders in his district to talk about specific problems.

Freeman's background in law will enable him to serve as a member of the Judiciary Committee. Other areas of concern to him are putting the state



**Sen. Mike Freeman**

spending priorities and budget process back into order, thus insuring quality education.

Freeman lists his strongest attributes as "enthusiasm, a high energy level and knowledge of state government." He said that at 34 he is "young enough to be aggressive and energetic . . . fresh enough to want to absorb lots of new ideas, and yet hopefully, experienced enough in government and politics to understand the give and take nature of it."

**Doran Isackson — IR**  
**Age: 44**  
**Occupation: Farmer**  
**Home: Storden**

Being a farmer and having held sales and management positions in the fertilizing industry, Doran Isackson is concerned about Minnesota's business climate and its agricultural economy.

Isackson listed unemployment as a chief concern of his constituents, adding, "We need to deal with that by improving the business climate in the state so we will be able to keep the businesses we have here, encourage more businesses to move here and encourage the expansion of businesses that we have."

According to Isackson, Minnesota's workers' compensation rates, corporate and personal income tax rates and unemployment compensation rates must be examined in regards to making Minnesota's business climate more favorable.

"I see workers' comp as the one that



**Sen. Doran Isackson**

stands above the rest as really making us non-competitive. We need to take care that we don't raise our taxes to the point where we make us less competitive than we are, thus driving more business out and requiring another round of increase in taxes. That seems to be self-defeating."

Concerning the agricultural economy, Isackson said, "We in state government need to take care that we don't put a heavy burden on the farmer by increasing the property tax and sales tax on the things he buys. We don't want to make it tougher than it is now by increasing his expenses. We also need to look at doing whatever we can in our limited way to improve the farm economy through the activities of state government . . . like keeping the port of Duluth open, for example."

Isackson said that even though he is a freshman senator, his background will help him "bring a perspective of the people back home."

**Dean Johnson — IR**

**Age: 35**

**Occupation: Lutheran pastor and realtor**

**Home: Willmar**

Dean Johnson is a four-year veteran of the legislative process, and he feels his personal experiences in dealing with the process will not only aid him, but the Senate as well.

In the House of Representatives, Johnson served on the Appropriations, Criminal Justice and Financial

Institutions/Insurance Committees. From that background, he learned that, "No one person can settle an issue; you need to have a coalition of people — Democrats and Republicans, rural legislators and metropolitan legislators. That is a very important aspect . . . being able to get along with your colleagues." That is one aspect, Johnson said, he intends to pursue in the Senate.



**Sen. Dean Johnson**

Having served on the House Appropriations Committee, Johnson said the state "needs to learn how to live within its spending habits and reasonable spending appetites." He added that the state must prioritize its spending, and by doing so, the state may keep some of its commitments, such as quality education.

The pressing issues that concern him and his constituents are job creation and the expansion of the tax base. He is optimistic the legislature will make some reform in these areas and in the area of workers' compensation and education financing. But he is cautious when viewing to what degree the state can continue to provide services it deems necessary when Minnesota is financially pressed.

"When you're financially strapped you don't have much latitude or flexibility in which way to go. It's not like the early '70s, when money was available and new programs could be done . . . we're just holding on by the fingertips right now and we're back to the basics," he concluded.

**Tad Jude — DFL**

**Age: 30**

**Occupation: Attorney**

**Home: Maple Grove**

In 1972, Tad Jude was the youngest legislator ever elected in Minnesota, and by 1981 he had been appointed chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the House of Representatives. He indicated that his expertise and understanding on several issues was enhanced as a result of being a member of several committees: commerce, elections, energy, agriculture, environment, transportation, government operations and judiciary. In addition, he indicated that his knowledge of the issues and law, coupled with his familiarity with legislative resources, provide him with strong attributes he plans to use in the Senate.



**Sen. Tad Jude**

According to Jude, his interest in continuing to serve the citizens of Minnesota hinges on "the interest I have in serving the people of our area — to find long-range, comprehensive answers to major problems facing the state." He added, "We need to balance the budget while taking care of the legitimate needs of Minnesotans at the same time. My more enjoyable moments as a legislator are when I can help constituents with problems they have with government. State government is here to help the people but needs to be reminded of that from time to time. We need lean, responsive government with the best interest of Minnesotans at heart."

Jude lists jobs, education, property taxes and solid and hazardous waste

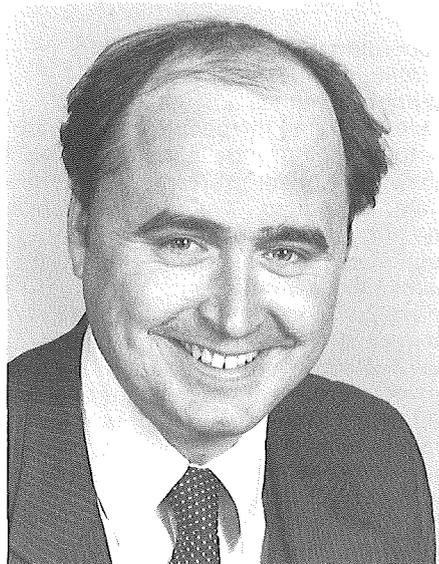
disposal as some of the concerns among his constituents. "These concerns are beyond simple solutions and require thoughtful, long-range responses. We need to find new markets for Minnesota products, lessen the tax and workers' compensation payments of Minnesota businesses, keep our education strong without undo property tax reliance, and encourage recycling. I look forward to addressing these serious concerns in the best possible manner."

**Fritz Knaak — IR**  
**Age: 30**  
**Occupation: Attorney**  
**Home: White Bear Lake**

In a less-than-serious tone, Fritz Knaak said that to run for office in a time when the state is so financially pressed, the senators must be "a little concerned, idealistic and crazy." Unquestionably, all legislators will be faced with difficult decisions dealing with the state's welfare, but Knaak feels this is a "fascinating time for freshmen to be involved in the process."

Knaak said that holding down taxes is his biggest concern, and he will scrutinize state spending very carefully. He indicated he would like to focus his attention on business development in addition to the state's finances.

According to Knaak, an important step in promoting business development is providing "major reform" in the workers' compensation rates. Other issues important to Knaak are the staffing and funding of the Appellate



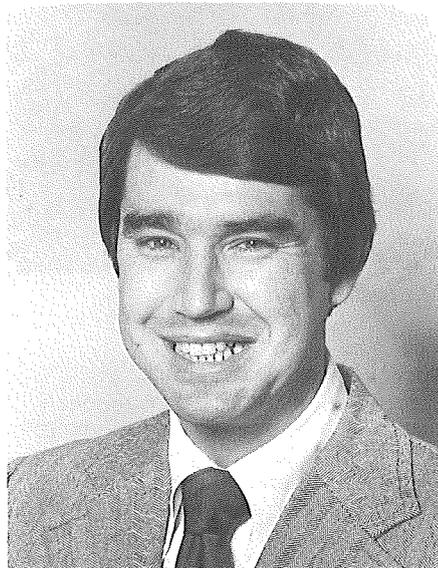
**Sen. Fritz Knaak**

Court; the regulation and institution of parimutuel betting; the assurance of safe groundwater; and the maintenance of quality education. But, according to Knaak, "The primary issue overshadowing all others is the state's budget problem."

As a group, Knaak feels the freshmen senators will be very "constructive" as the session matures, and he anticipates making an impact on the process.

**Gary Laidig — IR**  
**Age: 34**  
**Occupation: Legislator**  
**Home: Stillwater**

With the experience of having served on the Appropriations Committee in the House of Representatives, and



**Sen. Gary Laidig**

having played a major role in the budget shortfall negotiations last winter, Gary Laidig has experience working in the legislature during difficult times.

The energy and hardwork he exercised as a representative is sure to be his forte in the Senate, he indicated. "My first priority is going to be to try and be as good a senator as I have been a representative. When I came to the legislature I decided I did not want to sit in the back. I did not want to be a back-bencher . . . I wanted to be an activist. I wanted to get on appropriations at the earliest possible time. I wanted to know how the system worked; how government functioned; how it was financed; and I had a chance to do that."

Rather than asking to be a member of

the Finance Committee, Laidig said he would like to utilize his expertise and experience on the Tax Committee. In that position, he would be able to scrutinize how the state raises revenues with the understanding of how it prioritizes its spending.

Laidig also contends that the way the legislature handles the budget problem will affect business. "If we continue the rate of increase of entitlements as we have in the past, business knows they will be the ones to likely finance it." He added that to encourage business growth in Minnesota, it is important for the legislature and the governor to send out a signal that demonstrates its compatibility with business.

In addition, Laidig said business and labor representatives must come to terms in identifying the problems with workers' compensation before any concrete solution can be reached.

**Phyllis McQuaid — IR**  
**Age: 54**  
**Occupation: Former mayor of St. Louis Park**  
**Home: St. Louis Park**

As mayor of St. Louis Park, Phyllis McQuaid was required to work with other local elected officials, business leaders and city constituents. She feels that understanding the concerns of each of those groups and having worked for them at the city level will lend her a sound background for taking the Senate seat.

In her new role as senator, McQuaid stated, "Resolving the state's financial



**Sen. Phyllis McQuaid**

problems will be the most important thing the legislature can do. Helping economic recovery in the state by encouraging new businesses to locate here and discouraging existing companies from leaving will be of paramount importance. Therefore, it will be extremely important for legislators to make some major revisions in the laws affecting employers."

On a local level, McQuaid is very concerned about groundwater contamination in her district, and she is anxious for the legislature to initiate a workable solution to insure timely clean-up of hazardous material. Also, McQuaid would like to see a reexamination of the school aids formula, an examination of state funding of local government units and an exploration of the appropriateness of the state's jurisdiction over local government control.

**Lyle Mehrkens — IR**  
**Age: 45**  
**Occupation: Farmer**  
**Home: Red Wing**

Lyle Mehrkens decided to run for the Senate rather than continue to serve in the House for the simple reason that "with big complex problems you have four years to work on them . . . with a four year term you can take off a big bite."

In the house, Mehrkens served on the Appropriations, Transportation and Criminal Justice Committees. He foresees the state undertaking major changes in the areas of taxation and of education funding.



**Sen. Lyle Mehrkens**

"The tax laws and education funding process all came about in the early '70s, and we live in a little different world; things have changed and there needs to be revision in a lot of these things. In general, our taxing system has become severely complicated and there needs to be some simplification . . . the property tax has become slanted, it's an inequitable type of situation. Also, we need to look at giving local units of government some option other than the property tax to raise revenue," Mehrkens said.

In addition to resolving the state's fiscal problem, Mehrkens sees reducing high workers' compensation rates as a top legislative priority for the coming season. He stresses the importance of reducing those rates to avoid the threat of businesses located on the border from moving to other states. He added that solving the problem is essential to restoring business activity in Minnesota.

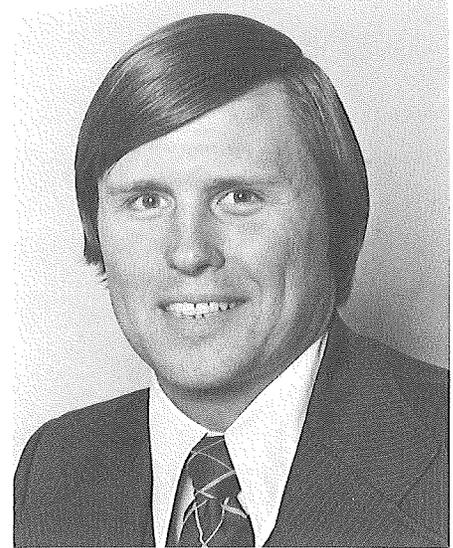
"There are a number of companies which are so close to moving that they are going to be watching to see whether something is done very quickly on workers' compensation. I don't think we can afford to string that out until the end of the session," he stated.

**Steve Novak — DFL**  
**Age: 33**  
**Occupation: Legislator and real estate sales representative**  
**Home: New Brighton**

Steve Novak is another freshman who can hardly be considered a newcomer to the legislative process. He served eight years in the House, where he was vice chairman of the Tax Committee for the last two years and assistant majority leader for the last session. He cites his knowledge of the state's budget process and tax structure and his experiences of being a leader as his strongest attributes.

His appointment as vice chairman of the Taxes and Tax Laws Committee acknowledges his previous experience in dealing with a variety of people.

Citing unemployment and the status of the economy as the main concerns among his constituents, Novak contends that "central to restoring the economy in Minnesota is, frankly, to resolve the budgetary crisis and to bring back a period of stability. He added, "Stability in terms of government structure is a far greater



**Sen. Steve Novak**

service to the public than tax cuts and other things we talk about." He also said that resolving the budget problem will remain the top legislative priority in the '83 session.

Novak is also interested in maintaining the state's water quality; expediting hazardous waste clean-up; resolving the workers' compensation problem; examining methods to insure a sound road system in our state; and examining the gas and electric utility rate setting structure.

**Gen Olson — IR**  
**Age: 44**  
**Occupation: Vocational education director**  
**Home: Mound**

Gen Olson enters the Senate with the expertise of having been the director of secondary vocational education for the Anoka-Hennepin Independent School district for six years. She also was an administrative fellow for the Minnesota Research and Development Center for Vocational Education at the University of Minnesota, where she managed a project to further develop and field test an occupational information system for the state.

"My greatest expertise in terms of background thus far is in education, and I would like to give a special emphasis to the financing of education," she said.

But Olson's background is not the only reason for her interest in these areas. "The primary concern throughout our area was the property tax issue. That's one of the reasons why I have a great deal of interest in both the funding of education and local government,



**Sen. Gen Olson**

because these are two major uses of our tax dollar. But also, what we do at the state level affects property taxes. Lately, we've been experiencing more and more of a shift of the burden back to property taxes. The property tax issue is not a simple one; it is a complex one and a lot of our policy decisions impinge on it."

Another concern of Olson's is the job and business climate. "We do not have a climate that is conducive to keeping business here. I would like to see the legislature send some signals, immediate signals, to the business community that we are going to make an effort to create a climate that will allow them to do business here in Minnesota."

In terms of sending that signal, Olson pointed to reform of workers' and unemployment compensation and an examination of the state's tax structure as important steps.

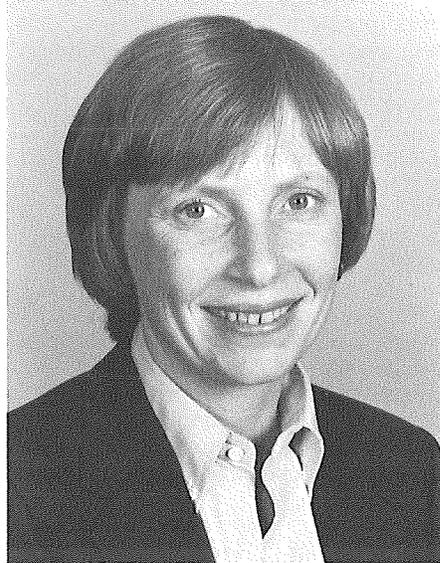
**Donna Peterson — DFL**  
**Age: 36**  
**Occupation: Legislator**  
**Home: Minneapolis**

As a representative, Donna Peterson served two years as chairman of the Housing Subcommittee. The expertise she gained in that position will assist her as vice chairman of the Energy and Housing Committee in the Senate.

"Housing is a problem area, not just for my district, but I think for the whole state . . . something has got to be

done with it or there is going to be poor housing in the next few years. It's directly related to our whole energy problem. If we can get those houses rehabilitated; get them insulated; have them become more efficient; we are solving several problems, and it's an area where we can put people to work," Peterson said.

She indicated that in addition to the concerns of her constituents over the economy, she heard them complain repeatedly about the rise of home burglaries.



**Sen. Donna Peterson**

"Practically every block has a victim on it. People live in fear of being a victim, or they live in fear because they've been a victim. We have got to take a look at what we're doing to the person who is caught and actually convicted of home burglary. My opinion is that we have to look at that as a crime of person and not a crime of property."

Another concern of many families is education, according to Peterson.

"It's the future of our state and our nation to see that the children are educated properly." She added, "When we make a commitment to a local unit of government, whether it's city, county or school district, that commitment must be fulfilled. They [local units] are in a situation now where we make a commitment to give them 'x' amount of dollars, and they don't know if they are going to get it or not because of the budget situation. How can they set their budgets accordingly?"

Other problem areas she cited were the

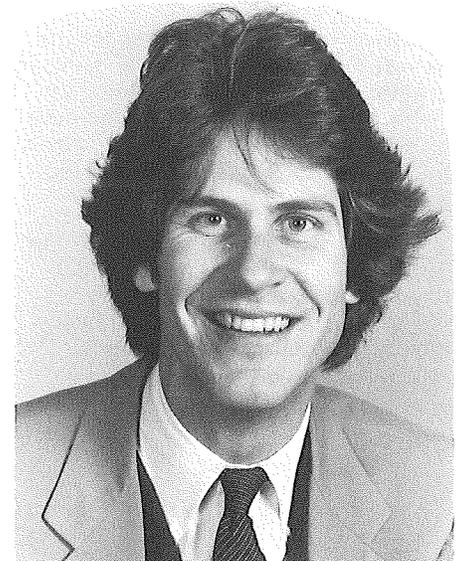
funding of the MTC and workers' compensation. Of the latter, she said she would like to see the establishment of a state competitive fund.

**Larry Pogemiller — DFL**  
**Age: 31**  
**Occupation: Systems analyst**  
**Home: Minneapolis**

With two years of experience in the House of Representatives, Larry Pogemiller sees the top legislative priority of the session as getting "our fiscal ship afloat so that local governments, the employees and the people of the state can have confidence in state government again . . . and that will require tough decisions."

During times of fiscal restraint, Pogemiller said the legislature must "take the time to thoughtfully analyze our services so we can prioritize our distribution of resources."

Having served on the Criminal Justice



**Sen. Larry Pogemiller**

Committee in the House, Pogemiller said he would like to continue his work in that area, specifically looking at sentencing guidelines as they pertain to burglaries. He also feels the state needs to provide funding for a new women's prison.

Pogemiller is also interested in policies concerning taxation, and said that the legislature "needs to re examine the local government aid formula and the relationship between property, sales and income taxes, with the goal of increasing the progressivity of our tax

burden while living within the means of our ability to raise revenues.”

Pogemiller said he hoped that “two years of legislative experience will enable me to be a more effective legislator.”

**Ember Reichgott — DFL**

**Age: 29**

**Occupation: Attorney**

**Home: Robbinsdale**

Ember Reichgott is the youngest woman ever to take office in the Senate. A lawyer by profession, she feels her experiences in representing small business will enable her to play an active role in promoting small business growth.

According to Reichgott, the solution to the state's problems of high unemployment, maintenance of quality education, and affordable property taxes is what she labels a “shot in the arm for the small business climate in Minnesota.”

“I feel that small business is the mainstay of our economic system. Seventy to ninety percent of all new jobs come from small business, so if we can stimulate that sector of the economy, we'd stimulate employment and hopefully, then, have more money in the economy to pay for such things as education. At the same time, we've got to watch our system of taxation to make it a fair and equitable system,” she said.

Reichgott will serve as the vice chairman of the Judiciary Committee,



**Sen. Ember Reichgott**

where her skills as a lawyer will be utilized. She indicated that judiciary is one area she would like to develop expertise in.

“One of the exciting things about being a lawyer and a state senator is the fact that we (lawyers) have such a broad background . . . our training is very general.”

Other areas of concern to Reichgott are reducing workers' compensation rates while “safeguarding rightful benefits” for injured workers; continuing significant state support for education, post-secondary education and vocational training; the protection of property tax relief; and maintaining programs for senior citizens.

**Don Samuelson — DFL**

**Age: 50**

**Occupation: Union business manager**

**Home: Brainerd**

Having served on the House Appropriations Committee for 12



**Sen. Don Samuelson**

years and having been the chairman of the Health, Welfare and Corrections division of the Appropriations Committee, Samuelson brings a great deal of experience with him to the Senate. His expertise in that position will be utilized in his position as chairman of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health, Welfare and Corrections.

Samuelson said he forfeited his power in the House because “in the legislature, regardless of what

particular job you have, if you're willing to work hard and you dedicate yourself to doing a good job for your district and the state, then a lot of times it doesn't matter if you are in a position of tremendous power or prestige, but it's individually how hard you work.”

In times of financial constraint, Samuelson still feels it is necessary the state continue funding social service programs, and he feels keeping nursing home reform intact is very important.

Samuelson says the top legislative priority for the legislature is job creation. And to create jobs, he indicated that reform of workers' compensation rates is essential.

**Donald Storm — IR**

**Age: 50**

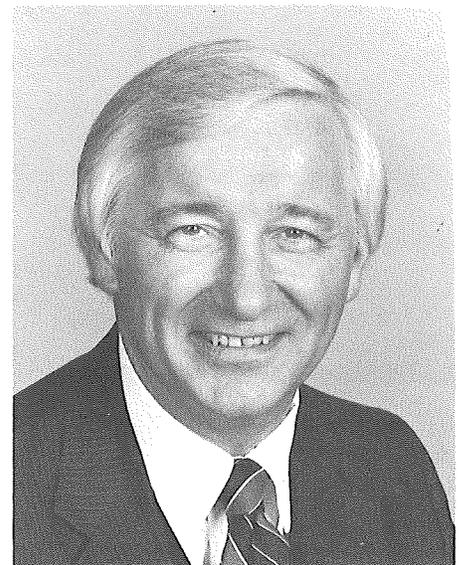
**Occupation: Executive Director, Tasks Unlimited, Inc.**

**Home: Edina**

As executive director of Tasks Unlimited, a firm which provides mental health rehabilitation services, Don Storm has a strong background in an area that parallels one of his main legislative interests — health and human services.

Realizing that those and other programs will be scrutinized in times of the financial crunch, Storm said the state must prioritize its spending, giving an edge to those programs that directly assist people over other state programs of less importance.

High on Storm's list of things to



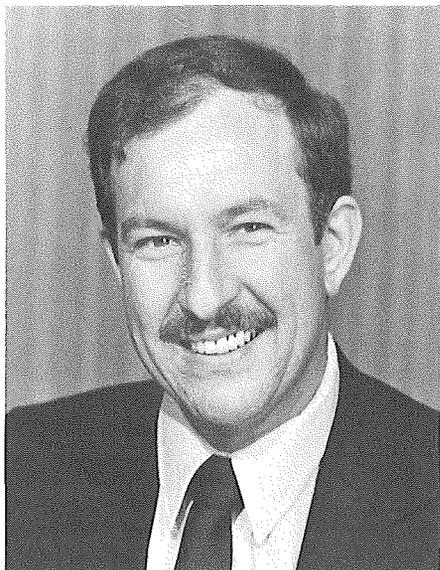
**Sen. Don Storm**

accomplish is reducing legislation that "impedes the entrepreneurial approach with a lot of regulation." He said, "Entrepreneurs, eight to ten years ago, took some liberties that shouldn't have been taken and the legislature decided to put a cap on that, and in doing so, they've really impeded entrepreneurial spirit."

Storm feels that "the state must establish a business climate that will generate new jobs and make it possible for businesses to secure enough profit for expansion and development, which will mean more new jobs. We need more taxpayers and I think that's a top priority — not more taxes."

In achieving that, Storm feels the legislature must tackle the problem of high individual and corporate income taxes and workers' and unemployment compensation rates.

Storm lists his other concerns as reviewing the role of state government as it relates to local units of government; fiscal responsibility as it relates to revenue prospects and spending patterns; and the development of some definitive policy statements for items such as education, energy, human services and taxes.



**LeRoy Stumpf — DFL**  
**Age: 38**  
**Occupation: Farmer**  
**Home: Plummer**

In the Senate, LeRoy Stumpf will be the vice chairman of the Education

Committee, an area of great concern to him.

According to Stumpf, rural areas and smaller school districts are faced with challenges of maintaining good education at an affordable cost.

"I think the challenge is to see how we can deliver quality education while maintaining the communities' identity with about the same amount of money we are putting into it now," he said.

Stumpf claims the state could examine the use of modern technology in teaching and educating children. He feels that along these lines, there will be more cooperation among the private and public sectors in reducing the expenses and delivering services.

Also, as a farmer and a member of the House Agriculture Committee, Stumpf listed three issues of primary importance: survival of the family farm, preservation of agriculture land; and improved efforts in Minnesota of developing aggressive marketing techniques for better farm prices.

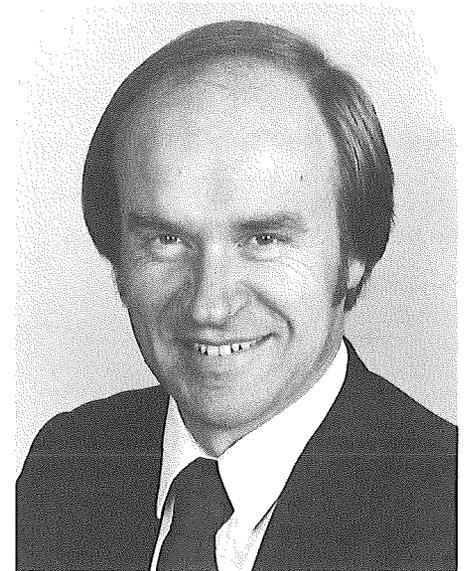
But the top legislative priority for the '83 legislature is making workers' compensation premiums competitive with other states while protecting the workers, said Stumpf. "It deals with jobs; it deals with the business climate; and it deals with getting Minnesota back on its feet," he added.

He also cites raising money for highways and improving the working relationships with local government as a high priority.

In assessing the coming session, Stumpf said, "There is no spare time for mediocrity in state government or for politics for politics sake. The decisions we have to make are far more important than to let those things creep in."

**Darril Wegscheid — DFL**  
**Age: 38**  
**Occupation: Manager of information systems and data processing.**  
**Home: Apple Valley**

Darril Wegscheid feels that because of his occupation as a 3M manager, people don't expect to see him as a member of the DFL caucus. He said,



**Sen. Darril Wegscheid**

"That may provide some specialty within the caucus . . . a resource available in the caucus that might not typically be there."

Wegscheid hopes to use his skills as vice chairman of the Governmental Operations Committee. In that position, he will be involved in examining the state employee pay bills; state pensions and the reorganization of governmental departments, such as commerce.

Wegscheid said the main concern in his district is that the local units of government are insured financial stability by getting the dollars promised by the state. According to Wegscheid, "The requirement is to take a good hard look at the financial resources in Minnesota, and if we are in fact going to be in financial difficulty, to let people know as early as possible and not get caught with an overly optimistic financial forecast."

Another top concern of Wegscheid's is keeping a "strong educational environment going." He has served on numerous educational committees in his school district, and he views education as a valuable resource to Minnesota.

Wegscheid is also concerned that the state continue its policy of taxing on the premise of ability to pay. Other areas of interest to him include commerce and health and human services.

**Ulland** from page 5

Ulland had high marks to give to the incoming freshmen senators. "I think we picked up some of the finest and brightest people I've seen in the legislature since 1969," Ulland said, "And in 1969 the legislature was attracting some of the finest minds in the state." In speaking specifically of the IR freshmen he added, "We have some brilliant people who have joined us and that's going to make an important difference in our ability to provide constructive alternatives and to provide some new leadership in important areas of the state."

As for the upcoming legislative session, Ulland feels the situation serves as a "challenge to do more with less" to fulfill the functions of state government. In addition, Ulland indicated that he felt the new legislative session will be similar, in tone and tempo, to the two years Gov. Perpich was the chief executive previously. "The legislative complexion was relatively the same, and although the times were better, I don't think the times necessarily dictate the legislative mood," he said. "It's a challenge," Ulland added, "to look at the functions of state government and try to perform them better."

Having served in the House of Representatives before being elected to the Senate in 1976, Ulland also spoke highly of the general atmosphere of tradition and formality which characterizes the Minnesota State Senate. "The traditions," he said, "tend to focus the work of the Senate on issues and not focus it on the personalities of the people supporting or opposing those issues." Ulland also suggested that having four-year terms allows for a perception of more considerate deliberation of the issues and of more statesmanship on the part of the Senate. "I have strong feelings to preserve the Senate as an institution," he added.

When asked about his general thoughts on the IR caucus for this session, Ulland concluded by saying, "I think the people of Minnesota have, historically, set high standards for their elected officials. The Independent Republican Senate Caucus is very comfortable with having those high standards set and high expectations made. We would hope to exceed those standards of performance when looking at the difficult problems that are before the legislature."



Photo by Mark M. Nelson

**Committees** from page 4

**Public Utilities and State Regulated Industries**

Parimutuel betting will be one of the most prominent issues before the newly established Public Utilities and State Regulated Industries Committee, according to chairman Neil Dieterich. Voters approved a constitutional amendment to allow parimutuel betting, but it is up to the legislature to create the appropriate vehicle for betting on horse races. Members of the committee will also handle issues relating to utility rate setting procedures and issues dealing with regulated industries such as liquor sales.

**Rules and Administration**

The Rules and Administration Committee, chaired by Sen. Roger Moe, is the panel which decides Senate administrative matters. The committee will continue in its traditional role of referring bills to the appropriate committees, developing the permanent rules of the Senate and scheduling bills before the Senate, as well as establishing administrative policy.

**Taxes and Tax Laws**

Sen. Douglas Johnson will continue as chairman of the Taxes and Tax Laws Committee. Coping with the state's financial situation is the committee's top priority for the biennium. It is expected that the panel members will continue to modify revenue raising policies to meet the state's financial requirements. In addition, adjustments to the state's payment and collection

dates in order to smooth out the state's cash flow difficulties will also be discussed. The panel has created a subcommittee, the Subcommittee on Property Taxes and Local Government Aids, which will have approximately the same status as a standing committee. The new subcommittee will be chaired by Sen. Collin Peterson.

**Transportation**

Sen. Clarence Purfeerst's Transportation Committee will be confronted with a variety of issues during the session. Specifically, the panel must enact legislation to authorize the sale of bonds for railroad rehabilitation and to allow for disbursement to rail authorities to purchase abandoned rail lines. In addition, the committee will hear proposals for incentives to employees for van pool and ride share programs. There is also the possibility of discussing an increase in the gasoline tax to match federal monies should the federal gasoline tax proposal be enacted in law. In the area of mass transit, the committee will consider MTC requests for the removal of the fare cap and for additional bonding authority.

**Veterans' and General Legislation**

The Veterans' and General Legislation Committee will be chaired by Sen. Robert Lessard. Among the items on the committee's agenda are consideration of proposals from the Department of Veterans' Affairs and discussion of the status of Agent Orange legislation.

Bills proposing an equal rights amendment to the constitution also will be assigned to the committee.

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