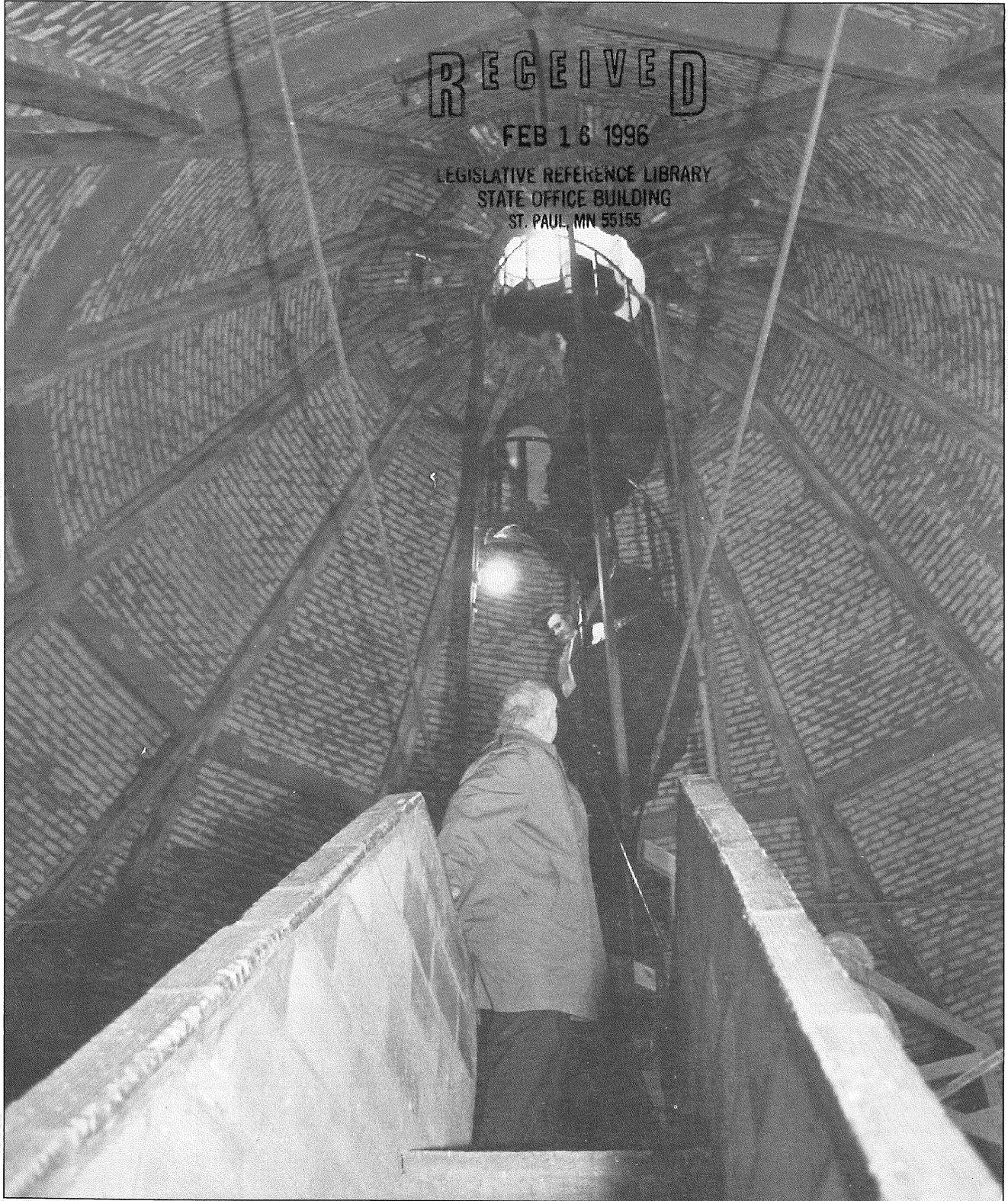


# SESSION WEEKLY

A Non-Partisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ February 16, 1996 ♦ Volume 13, Number 5



# SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • February 16, 1996 • Volume 13, Number 5

**Session Weekly** is a non-partisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Office. During the 1995-96 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and upcoming committee meeting schedules, and provides other information. The publication is a service of the Minnesota House. No fee.

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On the cover: Members of the House Capitol Investment Committee and the Senate Finance Committee got a first-hand look at the innards of the Capitol dome Feb. 9, courtesy of the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board.

— Photo by Laura Phillips

# Highlights

Proposed referendum . . .

## Do metro-area residents want a new stadium?

A non-binding, November referendum to test the mood of metro-area voters on building a new baseball stadium is one step closer to law.

The House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee approved HF2974 on a 15-7 vote Feb. 13.

Proponents say voters should be allowed to register an opinion on the stadium issue, which ultimately could cost between \$200 million and \$250 million in a mixture of public and private funds. But opponents say the ballot question is vague and even misleading. Still others say all Minnesotans — not just metro residents — should have a voice in the matter.

Under HF2974, sponsored by Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope), the question on the November ballot would ask:

“Shall the Legislature provide by law for the construction of a stadium in the metropolitan area to be financed by: (a) contributions from the team using the stadium; (b) private sources; and (c) taxes imposed on and limited to hotel and motel lodging and liquor sales in the metro area and a surcharge on admissions to the stadium?”

Echoing concerns raised by some committee members, Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) asked how much the Minnesota Twins would be contributing and raising through private funds. His amendment would have deleted



Julian Empson Loscalzo, St. Paul, one of the original members of “Save the Met” held up one of the group’s sweatshirts. His group formed years ago to oppose moving baseball and football from Metropolitan Stadium indoors to the Metrodome. The Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 13 approved a bill calling for a referendum on whether a new baseball stadium should be built.

“When the details come out, the defense will be ‘Yeah, but the people said they wanted it,’” said Osskopp. “And here we’re going to the public and saying, ‘We don’t know how much this will cost, where it will be built or how we’re going to pay for it, but here, what do you think?’ I think the voters deserve better than that.”

place, I know,” said Savelkoul, who also chairs the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission. “At least this is an attempt to get some facts on the table.”

Funding for baseball stadiums in other major cities has ranged from 100 percent private financing in San Francisco to 100 percent public financing in Denver.

Rep. Gary Worke (R-Waseca) tried unsuccessfully to allow Minnesotans statewide to vote on the issue. He said the bond and credit ratings of outstate towns would be affected by the use of state bonds for a stadium.

“It certainly seems to me this is a statewide issue and as a matter of fairness it should be voted on throughout the state,” Worke said.

But some members disputed the “fairness” argument.

Rest noted Twins statistics which show 75 percent of home game tickets are sold to metro-area residents. She also said studies of Twins fans show most outstate residents do not stay at a hotel or motel but rather return home after attending a game.

“It’s a little bit of an overstatement . . . that people from greater Minnesota come in great droves to the Metrodome,” Rest said.

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*“This issue is between a rock and a hard place, I know. At least this is an attempt to get some facts on the table.”*

—Henry Savelkoul, chair of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission

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the references to the team’s contributions and private funding sources.

“My concern is the public may believe there are significant contributions from the team and other sources, and from the information we got today we have no idea what those contributions are,” Krinkie said.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) said the team’s contributions and other details need to be included in the referendum.

Krinkie’s move to change the wording of the ballot question failed.

Twins President Jerry Bell said the team will soon have a better idea of how much it can contribute and raise from private sources. Even without that information, a referendum is needed to gauge public opinion, said Henry Savelkoul, chair of the Advisory Task Force on Professional Sports in Minnesota.

“This issue is between a rock and a hard

In response to the "who pays, who gains?" debate that has marked the stadium issue, Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) amended the bill to narrow the proposed hotel-motel and liquor tax from statewide to just the metro area. Such a limited tax does have historical precedent. Similar taxes levied on the seven-county metro area in 1977 to finance the proposed Metrodome were limited two years later to areas in close proximity to the stadium.

Officials from the hospitality industry spoke strongly against the tax provision, arguing that it will make the highly taxed Twin Cities even more unappealing to convention seekers.

"It's not fair to line-item tax one industry for something that benefits all," said Tom Day of the Minnesota Hotel Restaurant Association.

Another hospitality official said it would be cheaper for his industry to make up the \$9 million annual deficit claimed by the Twins rather than pay a proposed tax.

Although each of those testifying who questioned the bill had different interests, all mentioned the need for more details on the November ballot question.

Julian Empson Loscalzo, who spearheaded the unsuccessful "Save the Met" campaign, said information on team and private sector funding, availability of affordable seats, and even alternative plans, such as a state purchase of the Twins, should be considered. His consulting firm conducted an unscientific poll that found some Minnesotans want the state to buy the Twins.

"These are some things you could put on the ballot if you really truly want the public to have a sense of the deal they're getting into," he said. "You like to know who you're going to the dance with, and at this point, it's a blind date."

One legislator, Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul), borrowed Loscalzo's mention of affordable seats to raise a larger issue.

"What is your commitment to keeping a portion of those seats affordable and accessible to low- and moderate-income fans?" asked Mariani, who is co-sponsoring the bill. "If we are going to go forward with this, the public is going to be asking for some quid pro quo that goes beyond economics. I think my constituents are looking for more."

The bill does not bind lawmakers to follow the results of the proposed referendum. In both Washington and Wisconsin, voters rejected new stadium proposals. Legislatures in both states later approved financing packages to allow for new facilities.

**HF2974** now goes to the General Legislation, Veterans Affairs and Elections Committee.

— Kendall Anderson



## AGRICULTURE

### Protecting dairy producers

A House committee has approved legislation that would establish a state dairy producers board.

**HF2982**, sponsored by Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls), was approved Feb. 13 by the House Governmental Operations Committee.

"The Legislature finds that dairy producers in Minnesota have for many years received less than a fair return on their investment in livestock, equipment, and management skills," the bill reads. "One of the causes for this inequitable return is a lack of information on the part of producers about forces in the dairy marketplace that influence the farm gate price for raw milk.

"The Legislature further finds that dairy producers are willing and able to collaborate with each other through a respected, state-wide, legislatively authorized communication organization to improve the flow of economic and marketing knowledge."

The board would be charged with working within the dairy industry in Minnesota to set and maintain a raw milk price that will provide a fair return on dairy farmers' investment.

Board members would monitor economic aspects of the dairy production, processing, and marketing process, including the movement of milk by processors; price setting at the cheese exchange in Green Bay, Wis.; processor pricing schemes; producer check-offs and the use of checkoff funds; federal and state pricing policy; and other activities that affect the price of raw milk.

The bill would establish a board consisting of 11 members: one eligible family dairy producer from each of Minnesota's eight congressional districts, plus three members representing food consumer groups.

Board members would be appointed by the state agriculture commissioner. The bill specifies that members should be selected with the goal of achieving "broad diversity" in the processors to whom raw milk is sold.

Although board members would not be paid, they would be entitled to a "reasonable" per diem, comparable to that given to members of other Minnesota advisory councils and committees.

**HF2982** now heads to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

## No trespassing

A bill that modifies the state's trespassing law and aims to make it easier to punish violators unanimously passed the House Feb. 12.

**HF2411**, sponsored by Rep. Virgil Johnson (R-Caledonia), has generated strong feelings from both hunters and farmers. The bill that emerged was largely a compromise, with some victories for agricultural landowners and others for hunters.

Johnson said his bill makes it easier for local authorities to process trespassing complaints by changing the penalty from a criminal misdemeanor to a civil violation.

Under the bill, local sheriffs and wardens can issue trespassers civil citations on site. Violators would be fined \$50 for a first offense, \$200 for a second and could have their hunting license or other registration revoked for a third violation within three years. Under current statute, a violator found guilty of such a crime is punishable by up to \$700 fine and 90 days in jail.

Additionally, the trespassing exemption for hunters retrieving wounded game is expanded to include all lands. Current law applies to agricultural land only.

The bill also changes current statute that allows hunters to go onto private land to retrieve a dog "at bay" with a wild animal. The new provision allows entry to retrieve only a hunting dog and forbids the hunter from carrying a firearm.

Posting requirements also are eased slightly under **HF2411**. Landowners still would be required to post against trespassing once a year by marking a land parcel's corners and access roads and trails. They would not be required to post signs at areas accessible only through agricultural land.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



## BONDING

### Convention center expansion

Citing the entire state as a beneficiary, the city of Minneapolis began its push for state funds to expand and improve the Minneapolis Convention Center.

**HF2961**, sponsored by Rep. Richard Jefferson (DFL-Mpls), would mark \$35 million in bonds to fund the initial phase of the proposed expansion.

The bill was approved by the House Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Finance Committee Feb. 14.

The project's total cost is expected to be between \$162 million and \$167 million,

depending on its completion schedule. Ultimately, the convention center would be expanded from 280,000 to 500,000 feet of exhibit space, requiring the acquisition of three city blocks between Clinton and Third avenues in south Minneapolis, the redirection of the affected portion of Third Avenue, and the relocation of certain utilities.

In the 1980s, Minneapolis requested state assistance for the initial construction of the convention center, but the request was denied. As a result, the city bonded for the convention center's construction.

Representatives of the city of Minneapolis view the current request as an opportunity for the state to directly invest in what is already a mutually beneficial partnership.

Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton testified to the success of the convention center, but said some potential tenants are turned away due to a lack of space. Consequently, according to Sayles Belton, all Minnesota businesses suffer because they're prevented from marketing their products. She noted that 80 percent of the 5,000 Minnesota businesses that exhibit at the convention center are from outside Minneapolis.

Sayles Belton went on to say that the expansion project would create 4,000 new jobs, not including construction jobs, and that the project has the support of the Minnesota branch of the AFL-CIO.

According to Alice Rainville, a Minneapolis City Council member, an expanded convention center would deliver 24 national and international events yearly. Failure to expand the convention center would result in fewer trade show buyers, increased competition for state and regional events with facilities in cities such as St. Paul, Rochester, and St. Cloud, and fewer dollars spent by visitors in Minneapolis.

Rainville said \$129 million is spent by out-of-state visitors each year due to convention center traffic. Expansion, she said, means "fresh new money" of an additional \$100 million.

No new taxes would be levied to pay for the proposed expansion or operation of the convention center. Current operating costs are primarily covered by revenue from Minneapolis' sales, restaurant, and hotel taxes. Post-expansion operating costs are estimated at \$3.4 million annually, compared to an estimated \$14.2 million annual benefit in tax revenue.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) asked if a \$35 million commitment at this time meant the state was committing to providing future funds for the project.

Kathleen O'Brien, Minneapolis city coord-

inator, said total expansion costs would need to be paid by the state.

O'Brien went on to say that Minneapolis had exhausted its bonding capacity in originally financing the convention center, and that any additional bonding would threaten the city's AAA credit rating.

Minneapolis is one of only two cities with a population over 300,000 that has an AAA credit rating, the loss of which, according to O'Brien, could potentially endanger the state's AA credit rating.

The bill now heads to the Capital Investment Committee.

## Expanding affordable housing

The creation of affordable housing on state-owned land is the goal of a bill approved by the House Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Committee Feb. 13.

The bill (HF2268), sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), calls for the use of \$2.5 million in state bonds to purchase land, dismantle, or rehabilitate any existing houses or apartments on the land, and then sell the housing at an affordable price.

Dawkins said the lack of affordable housing statewide is a primary concern of Minnesotans and he wants to see housing included in any discussion of how to spend available budget surplus money.

The \$2.5 million would be administered by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) as part of the Neighborhood Land Trust Program, and will be available to individual cities in the form of loans.

At work is the idea of a land trust, whereby the land and the housing stock are under separate ownership. Anyone who purchases a housing unit is responsible for repaying the state only the cost of the house (estimated at three-quarters of the total property value). Meanwhile, the state maintains ownership of the land (one-quarter of the total property value), saving buyers from paying full price, and keeping housing affordable.

If an owner chooses to sell a housing unit, they must sell it back to the state. In return, they would receive the money they put into the house as well as appreciation based on the annual cost of living increase. This would allow the state to resell the house at an affordable rate since it wouldn't be necessary to repurchase the property at a potentially higher market value.

Eventually, according to Dawkins, the state would own \$2.5 million in land and families would own \$7.5 million in housing.

Dawkins said similar bonding efforts in the

past have proven successful.

The bill now heads to the Capital Investment Committee.



## BUSINESS

### Grant holders pay higher wages

A bill that would require companies receiving state grants to invest in job training and pay employees higher wages won approval from the International Trade and Economic Development Committee Feb. 14.

HF2894/SF2504\*, sponsored by Rep. Mark Mahon (DFL-Bloomington), is the second bill approved by the committee this session that mandates higher wages. It would require businesses receiving state economic recovery grants or loans to pay employees at least 175 percent of the minimum wage, or currently \$7.44 per hour. There is no such requirement in law today.

The bill, which the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) opposes, changes the 1995 law on economic recovery grants by prohibiting retail-only businesses from obtaining aid. Mahon explained that the provision is aimed at keeping the state from benefiting one Minnesota business at the expense of another, and attempts to keep state aid from benefiting large retailers.

The proposal also would allow grants or loans to be awarded for the sole purpose of attracting out-of-state businesses or retaining existing businesses, something the 1995 law prohibited. However, in such a case the company must use the aid for workforce training. The current provisions in law awarding grants based on need would not change.

Rep. Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) said the job training provision is pointless because labor costs and tax burdens are the real factors in business relocation.

A DTED official said limiting aid to job training keeps aid from encouraging some job-generating efforts.

"Under this we're not able to help a company that wants to buy a piece of machinery to employ a few people," said Jeff Rageth, DTED deputy commissioner for business and community development.

Mahon said the job training provision applies only to those companies that don't fit the need-based profile.

He also tried to bolster his bill with a critical report on the Economic Recovery Fund just released by the legislative auditor's office.

That report, released Feb. 14, found the fund helped some businesses that could have financed their projects without state help, which goes against the need-based requirements in statute. The report also found the DTED exceeded the \$500,000 aid limit with some companies. The report recommended the Legislature "clarify the intended use of the Economic Recovery Grant program." It also recommended the DTED give preference to businesses offering higher-level wages.

Rageth responded to the report and Mahon's bill, saying his department has made livable wages a goal over the past 18 months. Aid goes only to businesses that pay employees an average hourly wage of \$10 in the metro area and \$8 in outstate Minnesota, he said. The auditor's report found that half of the jobs created by the economic recovery program pay less than \$7.20 an hour.

Rageth told the committee a wage provision doesn't address the real impediment to more well-paying jobs.

"Minnesota has been putting \$6 million into the economic development fund since 1985, while other states are putting in increasingly larger amounts," Rageth said. "The money that Minnesota puts up is dimes on the dollar for what other states are putting up."

The bill was referred to the Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Finance Committee.

## Regulating pawnbrokers

The state of Minnesota would have the authority to regulate the state's 150 pawnbrokers under legislation approved Feb. 13 by a House committee.

**HF2752**, authored by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park), would set statewide minimum standards for cities and counties to regulate pawnbrokers. It was approved by the House Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs Committee.

Under current state law, cities and counties have the option of whether to regulate pawnbroker operations. Under **HF2752**, municipalities would be allowed to set stricter standards for pawnbrokers.

"This gives a basis for many cities to provide a floor," Greg Brooker, an assistant Bloomington city attorney, told lawmakers. He pointed out that Bloomington, Minneapolis, St. Paul and other Minnesota cities have "very strict" pawnbroker ordinances already in place.

Under the new law:

- Pawnbrokers would be required to apply for and receive a license from the city or county in which they do business.
- The city or county would be able to revoke

a pawnbroker's license, and would be required to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of such a revocation.

- In order to get a license, a pawnbroker would have to be 18 years of age or older; could not have been convicted of any crime directly related to the pawnbroker business, unless he or she showed "competent evidence of sufficient rehabilitation"; and would be required to be "of good moral character or repute."
- In any pawn or purchase transaction, the pawnbroker would be required to keep detailed records of the item pawned or sold, along with information about the customer and the cost of the transaction.
- Any personal property pledged to a Minnesota pawnbroker would be subject to sale or disposal when no payment was made for at least 60 days after the date of the transaction, renewal, or extension. Pawnshop customers would have no obligation to redeem pawned items.
- The customer would be required to attest that any pawned or sold item was not stolen and not subject to any liens.
- Pawnbrokers would be required to main-

tain a record of all transactions of pledged or purchased goods for three years, which would be available upon request to law enforcement agencies.

- Pawnbrokers would be able to charge a maximum monthly interest rate of 3 percent of the principal amount loaned in the pawn transaction, plus a "reasonable fee" for storage, if applicable, and services.

**HF2752** now moves to the House floor.

## Omnibus liquor bill

A House committee has approved an omnibus liquor bill, which includes changes in Minnesota laws governing liquor licenses, wine tastings, and warnings posted in the state's liquor establishments.

The House Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs Committee approved an amended version of **HF2590**, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Bertram (DFL-Paynesville), on Feb. 13 and sent the bill to the full House.

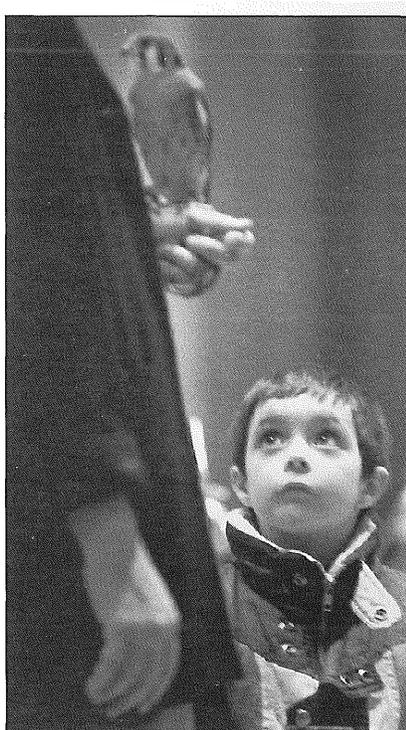
Before approving the legislation, committee members amended a portion of the bill dealing with warning signs that must be posted in retail and municipal liquor stores.

Currently, liquor store owners must post notices notifying customers of the state's penalties for driving while intoxicated and underage drinking. As amended, liquor retailers would be required to post a single sign in a conspicuous place that includes those two warnings, plus a warning about the consequences of drinking alcohol while pregnant.

In addition, the omnibus liquor bill would:

- delete a state requirement that applicants for wholesaler or manufacturer liquor licenses must be United States citizens or resident aliens;
- allow Minnesota bed-and-breakfast facilities to give guests two complimentary glasses of wine per day, up to 4 ounces each, to drink on the premises. Although bed-and-breakfast owners would not have to obtain an on-sale liquor license for that purpose, he or she would have to register with the state's public safety commissioner;
- allow liquor stores to give customers free samples of distilled spirits in containers up to 15 milliliters. Current law allows free samples of wine, beer, cordials, and liqueurs. The new law also would allow a brewer to furnish a restricted amount of beer to off-sale retailers for samplings; and
- allow tour boats on the St. Croix and Mississippi rivers to receive on-sale liquor licenses between May 1 and Oct. 31. Currently, only tour boats on Lake Superior are allowed to receive such licenses.

(See Feb. 9, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 4)



Three-year-old David Kaiser, Shoreview, got a firsthand look at a sparrow hawk in the Capitol rotunda during his visit Feb. 12. Other birds of prey on display from the University of Minnesota's Raptor Center included a bald eagle, a peregrine falcon, and a great horned owl. The display was part of a Department of Natural Resources program to promote the "Chickadee Checkoff" and to kick off the "1996 Checkoff for Wildlife" season.



## CONSUMERS

### Farmer-friendly fuel

The House Agriculture Committee approved a bill Feb. 9 that would allow gas stations outside the metropolitan area to devote one pump to ethanol-free premium gasoline.

Bill sponsor Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison) offered the proposal in response to another bill under consideration this year that would make ethanol-free gas available more widely.

"It's a bill I think people can live with," Peterson said of his compromise measure. The proposal also would allow ethanol-free gas to be sold at all Minnesota marinas.

Peterson's bill (HF3118) drew support from corn farmers and ethanol producers.

Those groups oppose Rep. Alice Johnson's (DFL-Spring Lake Park) proposal to allow ethanol-free premium gas to be sold statewide. Her bill (HF2205) is now pending on the House floor.

Current state law requires that all gas sold in the metropolitan area contain 2.7 percent oxygen. Corn-derived ethanol is the most common oxygenation agent used in the state.

State law also mandates that beginning in October 1997 all gas sold in Minnesota meet the 2.7 percent oxygen requirement.

Proponents argue that adding ethanol or another oxygenate to gasoline makes the gasoline burn cleaner and reduces harmful emissions.

Critics claim ethanol is harmful to snowmobile, boat, chain saw, and lawnmower engines and to motors in older automobiles.

Supporters of Johnson's proposal to make ethanol-free premium gas available statewide oppose Peterson's effort to allow the fuel only in outstate Minnesota.

Bill Strusinski, of the Minnesota Street Rod Association, said all Minnesotans should be able to choose whether to use ethanol-blended fuel.

"Everybody's a winner in that situation," he said. "What you've created here [under Peterson's bill] is winners and losers."

Opponents of Peterson's bill also said it would force metropolitan area owners of classic cars and recreational vehicles to travel as much as 60 miles just to purchase the ethanol-free gas their vehicles need.

Agricultural groups backed HF3118 as a way to protect a growing industry in the state. There are six ethanol plants currently operating in the state and four more are in the works.

"It's a jobs issue, an economic develop-

ment issue, and a key environmental issue," said Tom Cochrane of the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council.

The effort to make ethanol-free gas available throughout the state has drawn criticism from some because it is supported by Amoco Petroleum Products. Those critics claim Amoco is trying to boost company profits.

"When I drove home last weekend I saw a lot more corn stalks than I saw oil wells," said Rep. Marvin Dauner (DFL-Hawley), who joined others in support of Peterson's proposal as a way to resolve the dispute over ethanol.

"I hate to take one step backwards, but maybe this is the best we can do," Dauner added.

### Protecting privacy

Computer on-line information services and other businesses that maintain databases of customer information would no longer be allowed to sell such information without permission under a bill approved by a House panel.

HF2816, sponsored by Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) and approved Feb. 13 by the House Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs Committee, is designed to protect the privacy of consumers and users of on-line services.

"This is similar to a bill we passed two years ago about disseminating the records of people who rent videos," Kelley told the committee. "It gets worse when you get into the on-line information business, because the scope is much more extensive than just a person's taste in videos."

Such services have the capability of collecting a huge amount of information about an on-line user's preferences in a variety of areas, Kelley said.

Under HF2816, on-line services and companies that keep computerized records on their customers cannot disseminate information that identifies:

- a person by his or her home or electronic address or telephone number;
- a person as having requested or received specific materials or services from an information service;
- Internet sites visited by a person; or
- any of the contents of a subscriber's data storage devices.

The bill specifies that the only information an on-line service is entitled to seek from a customer is the person's name, home telephone number, home address and electronic address. Any other requested information may be given at the customer's discretion.

In order to get the informed, documented consent of a consumer to release such information, the information service must provide a privacy policy, as scripted by the state, to the subscriber. The customer must read and approve the policy before service can be provided.

The only exception to the law would be telecommunications services, which would be allowed to publish customer names, telephone numbers, and addresses in telephone directories without customer consent, but only if they offer the alternative of an unpublished listing.

Also, such information could be provided without customer consent under grand jury subpoena or court order.

HF2816 now goes to the House Judiciary Committee.

### No more slamming

The Minnesota House has passed legislation that would make it illegal for telecommunications companies to change a person's long-distance carrier without proper authorization.

HF2055, sponsored by Rep. Mike Delmont (DFL-Lexington), was approved Feb. 12 by the House on a vote of 132-0.

The bill would prevent "slamming" — essentially, the practice of tricking a telephone customer into changing his or her long-distance carrier.

Delmont listed some of the ways in which telecommunications companies have gotten Minnesotans to change their carriers.

In one such case, a Minneapolis man received a \$50 check in the mail from a long-distance company, not realizing that if he cashed the check, he would be giving the company permission to supplant the long-distance provider he was using.

Delmont quoted the man as saying that an unexpected \$50 check "looked pretty good right before payday," and so he didn't hesitate to deposit it into his bank account.

Other Minnesotans have received certificates for frequent-flyer airline miles, and "if you redeem them, you've been slammed," Delmont said.

HF2055 provides that a telephone customer may require that a long-distance provider receive his or her authorization before changing the long-distance service.

Delmont said the customer's authorization can be either written or verbal, but in cases of verbal agreements, if the customer files a complaint over the switch, the long-distance carrier will be required to provide proof that the agreement was made.

# Help Find Missing Children

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Contest Entry Form PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

## Long Distance Service Application

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

HOME PHONE# ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_

NAME THIS NUMBER IS LISTED UNDER \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ APT# \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

(MUST BE SIGNED AND FULLY COMPLETED TO QUALIFY)

BUSINESS PHONE # ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  YES, I WOULD LIKE A DISCOUNT LD TRAVEL CARD

### Marital Status

Married

Single

### Age

Under 18

18-20

21 & Over

### Income

\$0-\$20,000

\$20,000-\$30,000

\$30,000 +

### Credit Cards Used?

Visa  Mc

AmEx  Discover

By signing above I designate Home Owners Long Distance, Inc. (HOLD) as my agent to cancel my agreement with my existing carrier in favor of new service with HOLD, for my 1+ long distance service only, and understand that I can have only one 1+ long distance service and any previous selection of a 1+ long distance company made by me will be cancelled. I am the person legally responsible for charges on this telephone number written above. Charges for my 1+ long distance from HOLD will be billed by my local telephone company and I understand that my local telephone company may charge me a one time charge of up to \$5.00 plus tax for this selection.

This flyer, circulated by a long-distance provider, is one example of how telephone customers are "slammed."

"What we wanted to keep in this bill was giving a choice to each long-distance customer and not preventing long-distance companies from doing business in Minnesota," Delmont said.

If a long-distance carrier is found to have violated provisions of the anti-slamming law, the company must immediately return the customer to his or her original long-distance provider at company expense, and also pay for providing long-distance service to the customer during the period of unauthorized service.

HF2055 now heads to the Senate.

## CRIME

### Community notification

A bill that would notify the public when a serious sex offender moves into the neighborhood was approved by the House Judiciary Committee Feb. 14.

The bill (HF2045) attempts to balance the need to protect the public from sex offenders while protecting the rights of offenders upon release from prison, said sponsor Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester).

Similar legislation passed the House last year but stalled in the Senate. This year, the bill already has passed the Senate Crime Prevention Committee.

If passed, Minnesota would follow some 20 other states with similar laws. The bill has been in the works for two years and support continues to mount.

The Minnesota family names of Hussey and Wetterling have followed the bill.

Grant Hussey, 15, of Eden Prairie, was

abducted and killed in 1993 by a trusted neighbor and Jacob Wetterling, 11, was abducted in 1989 from St. Joseph, Minn. Wetterling hasn't been seen since.

Under HF2045, each state prison and treatment facility would set up a committee to determine, on a case-by-case basis, the public risk posed by all sex offenders who are about to be released.

Offenders would be classified as either low, intermediate, or high risk to the community.

Law enforcement agencies in the area where the offender lives, expects to live, is employed, or is regularly found would inform the public if they determine the information is "relevant and necessary to protect the public and counteract the offender's dangerousness."

If the offender is considered low-risk, police may notify other law enforcement agencies and any victims of, or witnesses to, the offender's crime.

For intermediate-risk offenders, schools, day care centers, and other groups that serve women and children which the offender is "likely to encounter" could be notified.

Anyone a high-risk offender is "likely to encounter" could be notified.

Widespread notification, however, would not occur while an offender is living in a residential treatment home.

About 350 sex offenders are released from Minnesota prisons, the state's security hospital in St. Peter, or emigrate from other states each year, according to the Department of Corrections.

These and many other sex offenders already are required to register with the state so their residences are known. In all, no more

than about 40 would be classified as intermediate or high risk, according to estimates.

The prison committee assessing the offender's risk would make that determination based on several factors, including the seriousness of the crime should the offender repeat the offense, an offender's prior history, and the offender's response to treatment. If an offender disagrees with an assessment, they can appeal to an administrative law judge.

Both the offender and police would be given a copy of the final assessment 60 days before release.

It is unclear how much the bill will cost in terms of travel expenses for those on an offender's review committee as well as for new staff such as public defenders needed to represent offenders during their "end-of-confinement assessment."

The bill does not yet include an appropriation.

If enacted, the bill would become effective Jan. 1, 1997. By that date, the Department of Corrections would have to develop a scale to evaluate sex offenders before their release.

The concept of community notification has been debated publicly since 1994 when Minnesota Supreme Court rulings released two men who had been committed under the state's sexual psychopathic personality law. Lawmakers met in special session that year to pass legislation to keep sexual psychopaths off the streets.

An extension of that debate centered around all sex offenders and how to protect the public once released.

HF2045 now goes to the House floor.

### Victim notification

A bill that goes further to warn victims of domestic abuse when the perpetrator is about to be released won approval from the House Judiciary Committee Feb. 14.

Under current law, authorities are to "make a reasonable and good faith effort" to orally notify the victims of abuse when the alleged perpetrator is about to be released.

HF2842 would — at the request of the victim — extend the notification to a local battered women's shelter or sexual assault program and local law enforcement agencies known to be involved in the case.

The bill hopes to increase the chances of reaching victims, some of whom may not be at their usual residence after an assault.

Some lawmakers questioned how the bill would work, given that many alleged perpetrators are arrested at night and released

before lunch the next day. They questioned if authorities would have time to notify the victims and shelters involved.

In some cases, said Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), there is only a small window of opportunity between the time when a judge determines whether to release a perpetrator pending a trial and when the perpetrator is actually released.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins), also requires courts to make an effort to notify a victim when a person arrested (or a juvenile detained) for domestic assault or harassment has a pre-trial release hearing.

The bill further states that the prosecutor must present to the judge relevant information regarding the victim's account of the crime before the court decides whether to grant a pretrial release.

**HF2842** now moves to the House floor.



## DEVELOPMENT

### Friendly land use

Local governments would be encouraged to establish a sustainable development plan under a bill approved by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 6.

Rep. Dee Long's (DFL-Mpls) proposal, which didn't make it out of conference committee last session, directs the state to draft a "model ordinance" for sustainable development and make it available to local governments.

Sustainable development — a concept promoted by Gov. Arne Carlson — involves the development of land and waters that minimizes environmental damage and provides for economic opportunities and community well-being. The goal of sustainable development is to preserve the environment for future generations.

There are no funding or enforcement provisions in the bill. Local governments adopting the model ordinance, however, would be advised that it would be the minimum regulation to guide all sustainable development.

The state Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning would be in charge of creating the sustainable development plan.

**HF1800** now goes to the House floor.



## DWI

### Omnibus DWI bill

No longer would driving under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs be the only routes to a DWI charge in Minnesota.

Under the omnibus DWI bill, approved Feb. 12 by the House Judiciary Committee, taking too much sinus medication, muscle relaxants, or other prescription and over-the-counter drugs could provoke an arrest. That is, if a specially trained officer determines that the drug or medication has impaired a driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile, or boat.

Under the bill (**HF2779**), it would be against the law to drive under the influence of any drug that affects the nervous system, brain, or muscles to the extent it impairs the person's ability to operate a vehicle.

This provision helps seal "a horrible loophole in the law," said Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), sponsor of the omnibus DWI bill.

Currently, Minnesota law allows only for a person impaired by prescription or over-the-counter drugs to be charged with careless driving, Entenza said. Behind the wheel, some of these people can be just as dangerous as drunken drivers and need to face the same penalty, he said.

A first-time DWI results in a misdemeanor penalty punishable by a maximum 90 days in jail and a \$700 fine. All subsequent DWI offenses are gross misdemeanors which trigger a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a \$3,000 fine. Rarely does an offender receive the maximum penalty.

**HF2779** also makes it illegal to drive an automobile with any amount of a controlled substance classified as among the most addictive narcotics, stimulants, and depressants. Street drugs fit this category. That means to arrest someone police would have to prove only that the driver has an illegal drug in their system, not that he or she is under the influence.

The bill doesn't allow just any officer to determine whether someone is impaired. The officer must be specially trained as a Drug-Recognition Expert. The Peace Officer Standards Board would be required to develop a plan to train a "sufficient" number of officers as Drug-Recognition Experts (DRE) to ensure they are available statewide each day to evaluate suspected drug-impaired drivers. The plan would have to be submitted to the Legislature by Jan. 16, 1997.

The test administered by DRE officers

would be separate from the preliminary test performed on the side of the road. After a patrol officer stops a driver, performs a field test, and suspects the driver is under the influence, the driver would then be taken to a police or highway patrol station where a more extensive 12-step test would be performed by a DRE officer.

Some of **HF2779's** other provisions would:

- create a new gross misdemeanor crime for violating DWI laws while driving without insurance;
- provide a longer waiting period before a minor, who has already committed a DWI offense, is issued a limited driver's license. Under the bill the waiting period could be 90 days; twice the time period that an adult receives for the same violation; or until the minor's 18th birthday; whichever is longer; and
- shift hit-and-run crimes from the section in *Minnesota Statutes* dealing with traffic laws to the section dealing with criminal vehicular operation. While seemingly a technical change, the result will be a greater likelihood of a stiffer criminal sentences once convicted.

The bill was briefly heard in the House Judiciary Finance Committee Feb. 15.

### Plate impoundment

A bill designed to fill a loophole and keep more chronic DWI offenders off the roads passed the House Judiciary Committee Feb. 12.

Gov. Arne Carlson vetoed an identical bill in 1995 calling it an "unfunded mandate to the Department of Public Safety."

Since **HF2675** includes a yet-undetermined appropriation for the department, lawmakers believe it has a better chance of being signed into law this session.

Under current law, when a person's driver's license is suspended for a third DWI offense in five years (or a fourth within 15 years), his or her license plates also are impounded for as long as the offender's driver's license is suspended. For a third-time offender, that's a minimum of one year.

But chronic DWI offenders have found a way around the law. Once their plates are impounded, they often begin to drive someone else's car.

Should they get caught under the influence in someone else's car, those license plates are then impounded. But all the car owner has to do is sign a statement that he or she was unaware of the DWI violation and new plates are issued — free of charge.

The bill gives the plates back to the car

owner (if the car was reported missing), but the plates would be coded with specific letters, so that law enforcement officials would know the car had been involved in a prior DWI offense. The plates would remain on the car for a minimum of one year.

The coded plates would provide law enforcement officers with a "reasonable suspicion" to pull the car over should the driver not be the registered owner of the car. From the patrol vehicle, an officer can check the car's registration and the license status of the car owner, which contains a description of the owner. If the driver doesn't match the description, the officer would have cause to stop the car.

In his veto message last year, the governor said the goals of the bill were laudable, but the cost to the Department of Public Safety would have been \$124,000 per year. The department estimated the bill would have called for three new employees to process 10,000 plates per year.

Carlson said it was "unfortunate" the bill did not provide the necessary funding.

**HF2675**, sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) and Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), now heads for the House Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Regulation Finance Committee.



## EDUCATION

### Vouchers defeated

Gov. Arne Carlson's effort to create a school voucher pilot project in Minnesota suffered a setback Feb. 15 in the House.

The House Education Committee's Subcommittee on Quality Initiatives rejected a bill (**HF2084**) that would have allowed parents to use state money for private school tuition.

Eight members of the subcommittee voted against the proposal. Only one voted for it, and that was bill sponsor Rep. Leroy Koppendray (R-Princeton).

But the vouchers issue appears anything but dead for this year.

The bill voted down by the House subcommittee was Carlson's original "school choice" proposal. It would have set up pilot programs in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, and one rural district.

After seeing the measure rejected by a Senate subcommittee earlier this month, Carlson developed an alternate vouchers pitch that focuses on St. Paul.

The governor's new proposal, which he first proposed Feb. 12, has yet to be intro-

duced in either the House or the Senate. Many expect it to come up for debate (perhaps in the form of an amendment) before the end of the 1996 Legislative Session.

"All there appears to be is a press release at this point," said Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul).

That proposal, pitched to the St. Paul School Board Feb. 13, would give the city \$12 million, only a portion of which would need to be marked for a voucher pilot program.

Come what may, members of the House subcommittee who criticized the governor's initial proposal seem unlikely to accept a scaled-down proposal.

"There is no support for vouchers. I guess that's absolutely clear," Entenza said. "... I don't see a lot of prospects for it in the future."

Entenza offered broad criticism of the vouchers proposal. In his view, vouchers would hurt public education and provide little help to students and parents.

"Is there really choice for parents and children when private schools decide who gets accepted?" Entenza asked.

Koppendray compared the voucher proposal to previous state efforts to initiate open enrollment, charter schools, and other progressive projects.

"I'm saying let's dare to take one more small step," Koppendray said.



## EMPLOYMENT

### Higher minimum wage

Minnesota's minimum wage would increase to \$5.35 per hour under a scaled-back bill that narrowly passed the House Feb. 15. The vote was 69 to 64.

**SF302**, sponsored in the House by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), passed the House but only after it was altered to cut the wage back a bit.

The current proposal would increase the \$4.25 minimum wage for large businesses to \$5 per hour in July 1996 and to \$5.35 per hour in July 1997.

Small businesses also would see an increase in the \$4 hourly minimum they are currently required to pay. For employers with gross annual sales under \$500,000, the minimum wage would jump to \$4.75 per hour in July 1996 and to \$5.10 in July 1997.

Originally, the bill called for the hourly minimum wage to increase \$2.75 over the next two years, peaking at \$7 per hour for large businesses. The proposal was later cut in the House Ways and Means Committee.

That committee also scrapped provisions that would have allowed employers to pay lower wages in exchange for providing benefits.

Supporters of the bill argued that raising the minimum wage would help people better support their families, especially the "working poor" — people who work two or three minimum-wage jobs but still need help.

Others argued that the wage hike would cost the state jobs and exacerbate economic problems.

Rep. Hilda Bettermann (R-Brandon) argued that the bill artificially increased wages for all workers, not just those earning the minimum wage. If workers on the lower end of the pay scale receive a raise, she said, those in the middle and upper brackets will want an increase, too. That, she said, costs employers too much and forces many to close their doors.

Wages, Bettermann said, should be adjusted based on an employee's productivity.

"Wouldn't that be nice," said Rep. Robert Leighton (DFL-Austin). But he asked lawmakers who believed that to "join us in the real world."

Increases in an employee's productivity haven't meant a wage increase for years, he said, adding that it may have in the 1950s, but it doesn't any longer.

Gov. Arne Carlson vetoed a 75-cent minimum wage increase in 1994. It is unclear if he would accept any such measure this year.

Minnesota last increased the minimum wage in 1991, when it was bumped from \$3.95 per hour to \$4.25.

In 1995, Rukavina sponsored a bill that would have increased the hourly minimum by a dollar over a two-year period. That measure passed out of committee but never came up for a vote on the House floor.

(See Jan. 26, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 6 and Feb. 9, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 14.)



## ENVIRONMENT

### Saving white pines

After a spirited debate between environmentalists and timber interests, the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee approved the proposed "restore the white pine act" Feb. 9.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth), mandates a 22-month moratorium on the logging of white pine on state land. The moratorium would end in December 1997 if the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) creates a restoration plan by that time.



Jack Rajala, center, of Rajala Lumber in Deer River, Minn., and Howard Hedstrom, right, of Hedstrom Lumber in Grand Marais, Minn., testified Feb. 9 against a bill before the Environment and Natural Resources Committee sponsored by Rep. Willard Munger, left, to protect and restore white pine in the state.

Environmentalists spoke in favor of the bill, citing statistics that show Minnesota has lost nearly all of its original white pines — more than 3 million acres. Loggers and forestry trade group officials said the bill spells lost jobs and other economic problems for forested areas.

DNR officials disputed claims that white pines are in significant danger and said they've taken survival and other steps to ensure their survival. The bill would require the DNR to create the restoration plan and seek funding in 1997 or 1998 for the plan.

Committee members said the bill would not significantly harm logging. Some said regaining past levels of white pines could actually create economic opportunities.

**HF1897** now goes to the Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

## GAMBLING

### Gambling on card clubs

A bill to allow card clubs to operate at Canterbury Park in Shakopee, Minn., was approved Feb. 15 by a House committee.

**HF2176**, sponsored by Rep. Chuck Brown (DFL-Appleton), was approved by the House Governmental Operations Committee, two days after the committee's State Government Finance Division approved an earlier version of the bill, which prompted some heated debate on whether the legislation constituted an expansion of gambling in Minnesota.

"If I thought for an instant that this proposal expanded gambling significantly, I

wouldn't be carrying the bill," Brown told division members. "This is a revenue raiser; that's why the bill is before you. They need some money to keep the doors of this facility open."

Canterbury Park, formerly Canterbury Downs, has struggled financially in recent years to keep its doors open to horse-racing fans.

The 1991 Legislature approved off-track betting — in which people bet on and watch nationwide horse races on big-screen televisions in betting parlors — at up to four off-track sites in Minnesota. However, the law was subsequently declared unconstitutional by the Minnesota Supreme Court.

In 1994, the Legislature voted to put the off-track betting question to voters, asking whether the state constitution should be amended to allow it. The measure failed by more than 56,000 votes.

However, backers still expect off-track betting to be approved at some point, which they say would breathe new life into Canterbury Park. Brown testified that card clubs at Canterbury, formed mainly for the purpose of playing poker, would be a stopgap measure to keep the park afloat until voters approve off-track betting.

**HF2176** would allow patrons to play card games on the park's premises on an "unbanked" wagering system, in which individual participants compete against one another and not against the sponsor or the house, which has no interest in the outcome of games. However, card club operators would pay fees to Canterbury Park for the right to play cards on its property.

As approved by the State Government Finance Division, the bill would have placed no limit on the amount that could be wagered. After considerable debate about bet limits and the enforcement of rules, the full committee approved a compromise amendment authorizing the Minnesota Racing Commission, in cooperation with the state attorney general, to make rules governing card clubs.

The amendment also would set a limit of 50 tables of card players at any one time; an opening-wager limit of \$10; and a maximum raise amount limit of \$10.

Card-club backers estimate that Canterbury Park could earn between \$3 million and \$5 million a year in fees paid by card clubs.

An amendment offered by Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul), also approved by the committee, would increase the number of members of the Minnesota Racing Commission by two: one member each of the Minnesota House and Senate, appointed by their respective legislative bodies.

Both Brown and Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) downplayed several lawmakers' predictions that allowing card clubs at Canterbury might lead to the further expansion of gambling in the state.

"I am not enjoying supporting another form of gambling," Osskopp said. "But this is about keeping the horse-racing industry alive in Minnesota; it's about keeping jobs. You've never seen (a card club) in operation, and if you had, you'd know it wasn't anything to worry about."

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) wasn't convinced. "You might find that you voted to let the genie out of the bottle by voting for this," she warned Osskopp, predicting that if the bill wins approval from the full House, other groups will seek legislative permission to operate similar card clubs.

The bill now heads to the House Taxes Committee.

## GOVERNMENT

### Bridging the gap

State agencies that work with Minnesotans who don't speak English would be asked to identify the most pressing needs of those residents and work together to provide them under a bill approved Feb. 15 by a House committee.

**HF1303**, sponsored by Rep. Carlos Mari-ani (DFL-St. Paul), directs the state Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council, the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, the Council on Black Minnesotans, the Indian Affairs Coun-

cil, and other groups that work with non-English-speaking Minnesotans to identify the languages of the clients they most frequently serve.

The liaisons for each group would then formulate a plan that includes the current status of the agency's compliance with Minnesota laws governing communications services for non-English-speaking residents and suggestions for improving those services.

The plans would be reviewed by the attorney general and the state Department of Administration before being submitted to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 1997.

Mariani told lawmakers that the purpose of the bill is to evaluate how well Minnesota laws are working and how cost-effective they are.

Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) told Mariani that he is concerned about non-English-speaking Minnesotans failing to learn English. "If these services had been available when our forefathers came to this country, we wouldn't be Americans now," he said. "We all learned to speak one language; that's how we grew to be one country.

"I have no problem helping people get established here, but it seems that part of getting established is learning English."

Mariani told Olson that the purpose of his legislation is not to keep people from speaking English, but to make sure the state is effectively communicating with those who don't speak it.

HF1303's next stop is the House floor.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

### Lowering college tuition

A bill to use \$50 million of the state's projected revenue surplus to lower college tuition next year failed to emerge from the Education Committee's Higher Education Finance Division Feb. 12.

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-St. Paul) said his bill (HF 2568) would have brought a much-needed 12 percent decrease to college students throughout the state. His proposal was supported by more than 40 students from technical, community, four-year and graduate institutions who filled the hearing room.

But many committee members strongly criticized Orfield's proposal, saying it was a short-lived solution to a long-term problem. Rep. Peggy Leppick (R-Golden Valley) said the bill "sounds . . . like a very ill-thought-out plan and frankly [sounds like] an election year gimmick."

Orfield, however, pressed hard for the measure, which was not acted on.



Students from the Minnesota State University Student Association marched to the Capitol Feb. 15 and rallied outside the House chamber in support of lower tuition costs.

"More than anything, this is a bill about opportunity. It acknowledges the fact that college or technical training is absolutely essential today," said Orfield. "College and technical training are the tools to getting a good job and they are rapidly moving out of reach of the middle class."

Since 1982, inflation has increased 64 percent, Orfield said. Over the same period, tuition has increased 183 percent at the University of Minnesota and 334 percent at technical colleges, he said. As it stands, the price of higher education in Minnesota is well above the national averages for all institutions, he said.

But committee members like Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) said relief should be targeted to those most in need — not offered to rich and poor students alike through tuition cuts. He and others said giving tuition relief through financial aid instead of tuition reduction would be more effective.

Orfield said a tuition cut made more sense than a needs-based approach because such programs both produce resentment of the neediest and don't survive politically from one year to the next.

"I have seen need-based programs used as powerful political weapons. And I do not know of any need-based entitlements that aren't in danger right now," Orfield said.

Most students who testified before the committee said they couldn't qualify for financial aid because they or their parents make too much. But they said they still had trouble dealing with double-digit tuition hikes each year.

One student representing College Democrats from 30 campuses told such a story about his friend, "Molly." He said Molly got straight A's in high school but now spends

two terms working as a waitress to earn enough to attend classes for one quarter.

"I figure she'll get her degree in maybe 12 years on that plan," Jeff Bauer told the committee.

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal), a bill supporter who is sponsoring a separate bill (HF2058) that aims to help families save for college, said there is a need "to address the issue on both sides of the equation, tuition and aid."

Orfield said there is value in one-year tuition relief.

"Any little bit can help people get ahead . . . if you look at the threads that students are hanging by, a little bit in the short term can make a difference," he said. "This is arguably more important than tax cuts for machinery parts. I think it's more worth doing than a lot of things we've done."

## HOUSING

### Allowing larger loans

Homeowners seeking a home improvement loan from the local housing authority could get twice as much as current statute allows under a bill the Housing Committee approved Feb. 12.

The proposal (HF2129/SF1925\*) is sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls).

The bill would hike the maximum rehabilitation loan amount for low- and moderate-income families from \$10,000 to \$20,000. Housing agency officials told the committee the current limit hinders their program.

"We're asking for this because sometimes the labor and material costs really spike up,"

said Tonja Orr of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, referring to increased costs in recent years. "We want the ability to react to the market more quickly to make this program more user friendly."

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) said he was concerned that increasing the maximum loan amount could decrease the number of people helped by the program.

Orr said there could be a slight decrease in those helped. But she said under the current minimum, some people are being turned away because the agency has determined \$10,000 won't adequately finance their project.

Another provision clarifies the agency's loan program for nonprofits. Under the current policy, nonprofits can qualify for special loans if they rehabilitate single or multifamily housing and show "the demonstration of new techniques for energy efficient construction." The bill would strike that language and broaden the program to include "innovations" in general, not just energy-efficient innovations.

"Some of the nonprofits thought the innovation had to be aimed at energy efficiency," Orr said.

**HF2129/SF1925\*** now goes to the House floor.



## HUMAN SERVICES

### Background checks for all

A bill to extend criminal background checks to all nursing home employees, including housekeeping staff and maintenance workers, won approval from the House Health and Human Services Committee Feb. 13.

**HF2303**, sponsored by Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls), expands current law which requires that state criminal histories be checked for employees in nursing homes, home care agencies, and boarding care homes who have direct contact with patients.

A 1995 law that increased penalties for people who neglect or abuse vulnerable adults required such background checks for some nursing home employees.

Since its passage, the Department of Human Services has initiated more than 8,100 background checks and uncovered 67 people who were disqualified from working in a nursing home.

Those individuals had criminal convictions that included murder, criminal sexual conduct, assault, and theft. Some also had substantiated claims of abuse and neglect against them.

"If we can keep the costs down," this is a

very useful tool to avoid potential problems, said Greenfield, adding that as yet, it is unclear how the state will pay for the additional background checks called for in the bill.

In 1995, nursing homes were scheduled to receive a reduction in the license fee they pay the state in order to operate. Last year, lawmakers decided to give them less of a reduction than had been planned and apply the savings to pay for the background checks.

Under the bill, a background check would search the previous 15 years.

In addition, the Department of Human Services would be required to conduct checks on personal home care aides working through unlicensed agencies. The department could charge a fee to recoup its costs for such searches.

The bill now travels to the House Judiciary Committee.



## INSURANCE

### Long-term care credit

Two bills that would provide an income tax credit or deduction for premiums paid on long-term care insurance are on their way to the House Taxes Committee.

The bills — **HF2885**, sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), and **HF2985**, sponsored by Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) — were considered Feb. 14 by the Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division.

Daggett's bill would allow Minnesota taxpayers to claim up to the lesser of \$100 or 25 percent of premiums paid on long-term care policies purchased for themselves, their spouses, their parents or their spouses' parents. The credit would be subtracted from the person's calculated tax liability.

Johnson's bill would allow taxpayers to subtract up to \$500 each year of the amount they pay in long-term care insurance premiums from their taxable income.

"The elderly in Minnesota are feeling the pressure," Daggett told lawmakers. "We need to give them an incentive to protect their assets and the confidence that they can pay for their care without becoming impoverished."

The state demographer has projected that between 2005 and 2010, the number of Minnesotans ages 65 to 74 will jump by almost 16 percent, from 298,650 to 345,920 — an increase attributable to the aging baby boomer population.

Between 2010 and 2015, the number will take an even more dramatic leap: from

345,920 to 434,790, an almost 26 percent increase. And from 2015 to 2020, the number of Minnesotans 65 to 74 will rise by almost 23 percent, from 434,790 to 533,630.

Long-term care insurance, which — depending on the policy — provides money to help pay the cost of a nursing home, an assisted-living facility, home health care, or adult day care, is a practical solution to the thousands of baby boomers who will require such care, Daggett said.

However, under current Minnesota law, there is no incentive to buy such coverage. In fact, it's remarkably easy for Minnesotans with sizable estates to transfer all or most of those assets before they enter a nursing home, leaving the state to pick up the cost under Medical Assistance.

The state now spends approximately \$1 billion a year on long-term care for Minnesotans who don't have the money to pay for it themselves, either because they gave away or transferred their assets or because they simply don't have it.

Paul Sailer, Wadena County's social services director, said two-thirds of current Minnesota nursing home residents are on Medical Assistance, and most of them transferred or gave away assets to become eligible.

Jerry Dock, an insurance agent in Anoka, Minn., testified that for every \$1 that the state would lose in revenue through Daggett's tax credit legislation, the state and its counties would save \$4.06 in Medical Assistance nursing home costs.

Both **HF2885** and **HF2985** were re-referred to the Taxes Committee for possible inclusion in the omnibus taxes bill.

### Protected from discrimination

Victims of domestic abuse would be protected from discrimination by insurance companies under a bill approved Feb. 15 by the House. The vote was 133-0.

**HF2344**, sponsored by Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls), would prohibit insurance companies from using domestic abuse as a negative underwriting factor for life or health insurance.

Such discrimination is occurring, Long has said, and that sends the wrong message to abuse victims.

In most circles, abuse victims are encouraged to speak out and to seek help. Insurance companies, however, are sending a message that abuse victims should stay silent or face consideration as a high risk and denial of coverage.

## Covering state employees

Minnesota's commissioner of employee relations would be directed to look into the possibility of offering a long-term care insurance benefit to state employees under a bill approved Feb. 15 by a House committee.

**HF2953**, sponsored by Rep. Linda Wejman (DFL-Mpls), would direct the commissioner to consider the benefit, which would be an option offered to retiring state employees.

The House Governmental Operations Committee approved the bill, which will be placed on the House consent calendar.

Language that might have been interpreted as mandating long-term care insurance for state workers was removed from the bill at the request of Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul), Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee chair.



## LAW

### Highway patrol colors

The scores of highway motorists practiced in the art of spotting those familiar maroon state patrol cars may soon have to rely on other distinguishing marks.

A bill that would allow the Minnesota State Patrol to purchase white cars as well as maroon was approved Feb. 9 by the House Transportation and Transit Committee.

Current law mandates that state patrol cars "shall be predominantly maroon."

The bill (**HF2292**), sponsored by Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton), aims to provide a substantial savings in annual car purchases made by the state patrol.

The patrol purchases about 200 new vehicles each year. Maroon is not a standard color for the model lines used by troopers, so taxpayers get stuck with the bill for custom painting.

It costs \$700 to \$800 per vehicle for the paint jobs, according to Schumacher. That means allowing the patrol to use white cars could save the state as much as \$160,000 a year.

Several committee members challenged the conventional wisdom that camouflaged patrol cars that are difficult to spot in traffic help enforce speed limits.

Rep. Don Frerichs (R-Rochester) said making state patrol cars more identifiable on the roads may have a chilling effect on speeding motorists.

Using white cars may be one way to make troopers more visible to other motorists, he said.

The bill now goes to the Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Finance Committee.



## METRO AFFAIRS

### Noise mitigation

A bill requiring the Metropolitan Airports Commission to make yearly reports to the Legislature on noise mitigation projects was passed Feb. 15 by the full House on a 132-0 vote.

**HF2285**, sponsored by Rep. Edwina Garcia (DFL-Richfield), would require the commission to make its legislative report by March 15 each year on noise mitigation projects implemented in the previous year at all Twin Cities airports and the amount of money spent on those projects.

**HF2285** also specifies that 40 percent of the money raised through passenger facilities charges during 1997 be devoted to noise mitigation projects. Under current law, the commission is required to spend the same amount on projects this year.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



## TAXES

### Tax breaks extended

Speeding up the elimination of one state tax and preventing the double taxation of certain services are among the provisions of a bill heard by the House Taxes Committee Feb. 13.

Sponsored by Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope), **HF3173** will be included in the omnibus tax bill on which the committee is scheduled to vote Feb. 23. Its provisions would cost the state \$12 million in lost revenue over the current biennium. The House Ways and Means Committee has recommended that the bill's cost not exceed \$10 million.

**HF3173** aims "to get us thinking about the next four years," Rest said. "Perhaps the discussion can lead to some fundamental changes in sales tax policy and also give us an opportunity to work with the [Department of Revenue] on some compliance and administrative issues in an open environment . . ."

The Department of Revenue estimates that the bill would cost the state an additional \$46.8 million in the 1998-99 biennium. Changes in the taxation of capital equipment alone would cost about \$34 million through 1999, according to initial revenue department estimates.

The bill would phase out the sales tax on replacement capital equipment over a four-year period. That provision, also included in the governor's tax initiative proposal

(**HF2433**), would speed up the current phase-down of the tax on replacement equipment.

In 1994, the Legislature began reducing the rate from 6.5 percent to a proposed 2 percent in 1998. Under Rest's bill, the rate would drop to 3.8 percent in 1997 and be eliminated in 1999.

Additionally, the current sales-tax exemption on used farm machinery, which will expire in July, would become permanent. Currently, new farm machinery is taxed at 2.5 percent. The permanent exemption would cost the state \$5 million in lost revenue through 1999.

**HF3173** also attempts to simplify the current tax on out-of-state purchases. Under current law, any purchase made in person or through mail order from another state for non-business purposes is subject to the state sales tax. The bill would exempt purchases up to \$770. The state would lose about \$200,000 in revenue through 1999.

"It is an effort to ensure that individuals who are buying things in another state aren't inadvertently breaking the law," Rest said.

While Rest's provision aims to keep law-abiding citizens from becoming "scofflaws," a related bill by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) — not acted on by the committee — aims to encourage reporting of out-of-state purchases that exceed the minimum. **HF2812** would put a space on income tax forms in which to report out-of-state taxable purchases.

The third major provision in **HF3173** extends the current exemption on materials used in the production of taxable products to taxable services. The goal is to prevent "tax pyramiding," or taxing something more than once. Initial revenue department estimates indicate the change will mean about \$20 million in lost revenue through 1999.

### Easing the tax burden

A House panel is considering three bills that would offer property tax relief to cabin owners in Minnesota.

The House Taxes Committee's Property Tax and Tax Increment Financing Division on Feb. 12 considered **HF3213**, sponsored by Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope); **HF2797**, sponsored by Rep. Eileen Tompkins (R-Apple Valley); and **HF2967**, sponsored by Rep. Bill Macklin (R-Lakeville).

Currently, the owners of seasonal recreational property in Minnesota pay 2 percent in property taxes on the first \$72,000 of market value per property, and 2.5 percent on the portion over \$72,000 of market value.

Last year's Legislature voted to reduce the 2 percent rate to 1.9 percent for taxes payable

in 1997, and 1.8 percent for taxes payable in 1998 and thereafter.

Rest's bill would reduce the class rate on non-commercial seasonal recreational property to 1.75 percent of market value for taxes payable in 1997, and 1.5 percent of market value for taxes payable in 1998 and thereafter.

Tompkins' bill would reduce the property tax class rates on seasonal recreational property with a market value of up to \$72,000 to 1.67 percent for taxes payable in 1997, 1.33 percent for taxes payable in 1998, and 1 percent for taxes payable in 1999 and thereafter.

The property tax class rates on property with a market value of more than \$72,000 would be reduced to 2.33 percent for taxes payable in 1997, 2.16 percent for taxes payable in 1998, and 2 percent for taxes payable in 1999 and thereafter.

Macklin's bill would reduce the class rate on all seasonal recreational property to 1.15 percent, effective with taxes payable in 1997.

All three of the bills provide that Minnesota's homestead and agricultural credit aid would not be increased to compensate local taxing jurisdictions for tax base reductions resulting from the legislation.

Rest told division members that her constituents believe that property tax relief on cabins should be one of the Legislature's main priorities.

The Property Tax and Tax Increment Financing Division also considered two other bills that would affect cabin owners:

- **HF2965**, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), would exempt cabins from any voter-approved levies, such as school district referendums, that are required to be assessed against their market value.

"The concept is that people who own such property are not allowed to vote in such referendums, so they shouldn't be required to pay," Goodno told the panel. "It's getting to the point now where middle- and low-income people can't afford to own lake property, and this bill addresses how to make it more affordable for them to enjoy these properties."

- **HF2966**, sponsored by Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), proposes a constitutional amendment that would allow Minnesotans who own cabins to vote in that property's precinct on matters dealing with property taxes or issuance of bonds.

"This is the basic premise of taxation without representation," Krinkie said. "These property owners are paying taxes in these jurisdictions without the opportunity to vote on them and express their opinions."

The five bills will be considered for possible inclusion in the House Taxes Committee's omnibus tax bill.

## New carbon fuel tax

A bill to impose a tax on carbon-based fuels and use the revenues to buy down property taxes was heard Feb. 15 in the House Taxes Committee.

**HF3063** attempts to shift the tax burden from property to energy consumption. It is revenue neutral.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope), coal, natural gas, liquid fuels and mixed municipal solid waste would be taxed at \$10 per ton of carbon content beginning next year. The tax would increase \$10 every year until it reached \$50 per ton in 2001. Revenues from the tax would be used to both reduce property taxes through school levies and refund employers a portion of their payroll tax. The property tax rebates would be appropriated from the state's general fund.

Proponents say the bill is a good example of using tax policy to encourage efficiency and ease property taxes. Critics say it might hurt low-income people and doesn't guarantee long-term tax relief.

Bill Blazer of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce said revenue from the tax could disappear over the long term if the "behavior-changing" law works, causing fewer utilities to use coal and other taxable fuels. He said tax policy should not be based primarily on changing behaviors.

Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) objected to Blazer's criticism, saying businesses often support changes in property taxes which are aimed at changing behavior.

"Is it only in this case that the business community doesn't support changing the tax structure to shape behavior?" she asked.

Rest said tax policy should be used to encourage things that are "good" for the economy or environment and discourage those that are "bad."

The Minneapolis-based Institute for Local Self-Reliance, which supports the bill, estimates the average Minnesota home-owning family would see a \$265 annual increase in their energy expenses under **HF3063**. The family would see an equal drop in property and payroll taxes, according to David Morris of the institute.

Both renters and low-income people, the latter of whom often live in older housing and are marginally employed, could see a bigger increase in energy costs and a smaller drop in property tax and payroll benefits, Morris said.

Wayne Cox, of Citizens for Tax Justice, called the tax "regressive" and said it could hurt the poor.

Rest's bill also allocates \$80 million from the general fund for the low-income weatherization and energy programs.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) said the bill "has some potentially devastating effects on the mining industry in northern Minnesota where our high-wage jobs exist."

**HF3063** will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill next week

## Reinstating a tax exemption

A bill that would make all counties, cities, towns, and special districts in Minnesota exempt from sales and use taxes was heard Feb. 14 by a House panel.

**HF3035**, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), would reinstate a tax exemption that the state's local governments enjoyed until the Legislature abolished it in 1992.

"What we're doing now is taxing a taxing entity," Goodno told the House Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division. "It's just good public policy to exempt them from these taxes."

Beginning in June 1992, sales and purchases by local units of government in Minnesota have been subject to the state's sales and use taxes. School districts, the University of Minnesota, state colleges and universities, local government-run hospitals and nursing homes and the purchase of books, periodicals and other circulation items by public libraries remain exempt from sales and use taxes.

But exempting all governmental units from the taxes again would mean an estimated revenue loss to the state of \$76.8 million in the 1996-97 biennium and \$181.1 million in the 1988-99 biennium.

During the panel's brief discussion of **HF3035**, Goodno did not suggest how the state could make up the difference if his bill became law.

Gary Carlson, representing the League of Minnesota Cities, urged lawmakers to support the bill, pointing out that Minnesota is one of only seven states that imposes sales tax on local government purchases.

Carlson called the law inefficient and confusing.

The Sales and Income Tax Division took no action on Goodno's bill, but referred it to the House Taxes Committee for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

## Extending the wind exemption

A bill that would make Minnesota's sales tax exemption for wind energy conversion systems permanent was considered Feb. 14 by a House panel.

The House Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division laid over **HF2654**, sponsored by Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda), to be considered for possible inclusion in the Taxes Committee's omnibus tax bill.

The sales tax exemption, which became law in 1992, is due to expire on July 1. Winter's bill would make the exemption permanent.

"We want to try to continue to develop the wind generation capacity in the southwest corner of the state," Winter told the panel. "We'll have a competitive business that will continue to prosper and grow in Minnesota."

According to the Minnesota Department of Revenue, Winter's proposal would mean a revenue loss of \$400,000 for the state in the current biennium and \$1.1 million in the 1998-99 biennium.

Northern States Power Co. (NSP) is required to expand its wind farm power capacity to 400 megawatts by the year 2000. Currently, 100 megawatts of capacity is operational, with another 100 megawatts scheduled to be installed this year.

No installation is scheduled for 1997, but 200 megawatts are planned for installation during 1998 and 1999. NSP has asked the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for permission to accelerate its planned installation.

Also, a number of cooperatives are seeking to establish operations as independent wind power producers in Minnesota. The American Wind Energy Association says the cooperatives expect to purchase about \$1 million worth of wind energy conversion system equipment between July 1, 1997, through 2002.



## TRANSPORTATION

### Changing the rules

The Minnesota House has passed legislation that exempts truck drivers transporting agricultural commodities or farm supplies from some federal regulations.

**HF2163**, sponsored by Rep. Roger Cooper (DFL-Bird Island), was passed Feb. 12 by the House on a 132-0 vote.

The bill specifies that truck drivers transporting such items during planting and harvesting seasons, from March 15 through Dec. 15 each year, are not subject to federal rules

that specify the maximum driving and on-duty times for truck drivers.

Drivers are limited to an area within a 100-mile radius from the source of the commodities or the distribution point for the farm supplies.

**HF2163** also sets out new conditions under which the state's public safety commissioner can grant medical waivers to truck drivers.

The new law provides that the commissioner can grant a waiver for intrastate transportation only. The applicant must meet a set of guidelines and provide requested medical information before such a waiver is granted.

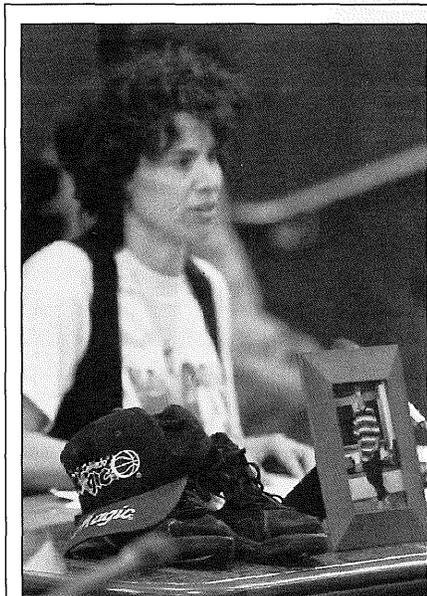
**HF2163** now heads to the Senate.

## Memorial roadways

Four stretches of Minnesota highway have been granted special designations by the Minnesota House.

On Feb. 12, lawmakers unanimously approved **HF2068**, which designates Anoka County Road 7 from its intersection with Grant Street in Anoka to its intersection with Anoka County Road 24 in St. Francis as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway. The vote was 128-0.

Sponsored by Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-



Cheryle Matis, the mother of Brandon Block, a 14-year-old Plymouth boy accidentally shot and killed by a classmate in 1994, testified before the House Judiciary Committee Feb. 9 in support of a bill that would have required guns to be stored unloaded and locked where children live. The bill was amended and now would expand a current gun storage law. Under the bill, an adult who negligently stores a firearm that ends up in the hands of someone under 18 would be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. Current law sets the limit at 14.

Cedar), **HF2068** now moves to the Senate.

The House, on a 131-0 vote, also passed **HF2410/SF1946\*** sponsored by Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby). It names three highways:

- Trunk Highway 169, from its intersection with Trunk Highway 10 near Elk River to its intersection with Minnesota Highway 18 near Garrison, and Minnesota Highway 18 from its intersection with Trunk Highway 169 to its intersection with Trunk Highway 371 near Brainerd, also was designated a POW/MIA Memorial Highway.
- Trunk Highway 115 was designated Veterans Memorial Highway.
- A segment of old County Road 21, from its intersection with Trunk Highway 73 to the Moose Lake Psychopathic Center, was designated John Riley Memorial Boulevard.

John Riley, former commissioner of transportation and chief of staff under Gov. Arne Carlson, died of brain cancer in March 1994.

## Amish buggy byway

A portion of road in southeastern Minnesota may become safer and raise cultural awareness if a bill approved by a House panel Feb. 13 becomes law.

**HF2092/SF1909\*** sponsored by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) would designate Highway 52 in Fillmore County the Amish Buggy Byway. The stretch would be marked by road signs.

Supporters of the bill hope it will make drivers aware of the possible presence of Amish buggies on the busy stretch of road and more cautious.

A recent *Rochester Post-Bulletin* article quotes Fillmore County Sheriff Jim Connolly as saying there have been three or four minor accidents on the road in the past year, as well as other unreported accidents.

There are approximately 700 Amish residents in Fillmore County.

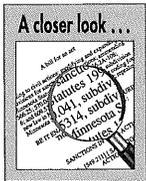
The bill calls for local residents to reimburse the Department of Transportation (MnDOT) the cost of marking the highway, estimated to be about \$3,000.

The mayor and city council of Harmony said they would like to see the state foot the bill since signs formerly marking the route as a buggy area were taken down by MnDOT prior to repair of Highway 52. Also, they said, the signs will encourage interest in local culture, adding more tourist dollars to southeastern Minnesota.

The bill, approved by the Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Committee, now heads to the House floor.

A closer look . . .

# Omnibus K-12 bill provides technology grants



A \$26 million education spending proposal advancing in the House aims to bolster technology in Minnesota's public schools and to provide new programs for the state's most needy students.

The omnibus education bill (HF2156), sponsored by Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) was approved Feb. 14 by the K-12 Finance Division of the House Education Committee.

"We wanted to continue on the path we started last year," said Johnson, who chairs the panel. "We're looking at technology, accountability, discipline, and early intervention."

The proposal does not include funding for some of Gov. Arne Carlson's major education initiatives, and the bill would spend only about half of what the governor recommended.

Left out were the \$15 million Carlson proposed to spend on a school voucher pilot program and money he wanted to spend on computer hardware and other programs.

But the bill would spend \$11 million to bolster the use of technology and would devote funds to after-school programs, full-day kindergarten, and other projects designed to help disadvantaged students.

And the measure would allow more decision-making power at the school site level and narrow the focus of the state's proposed graduation standards.

The bill now moves to the full Education Committee.

## Boosting technology

A total of \$11 million would be spent on technology programs under the bill. Most of that money — some \$8 million — would be used to expand Internet access in schools and libraries.

The 1995 Legislature passed a law that included a \$10.5 million grant program to connect schools and regional public library systems to the information superhighway.

HF2156 would make an additional \$8 million in grant funding available in 1997.

Another \$1.4 million would be devoted to training teachers in the use of technology so they can pass on those skills to their students.

Groups of at least 10 teachers would be allowed to independently seek grants to pursue training for the use of computer hardware and software.

Providing such training will help ensure

that the state gets a good return on its investments in technology, according to Johnson. "Otherwise it sits out there and doesn't get used," she said.

Another of the bill's provisions — although a seemingly minor one — could greatly help to improve Internet access in rural Minnesota schools.

The measure would allow telephone companies to provide service to schools and libraries at reduced prices or for no cost.

Such a change could make a significant impact in rural areas where a long-distance call is required to connect to the worldwide communications network.

Several of the major technology-related proposals in the omnibus bill came from a separate bills (HF2500 and HF2616) sponsored Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins).

Under the omnibus bill another grant program would be set up to enhance the use of technology in after-school programs.

A total of \$1 million would be offered in grants to school districts, private schools,

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said the goal of the expanded kindergarten proposal is to make sure students arrive in first grade prepared to handle academic basics such as reading and writing.

Proponents of the measure also said it would have benefits that reach far beyond the first grade. They argued that kids who fall behind at a young age often end up with serious academic and behavioral problems in later grades.

"We need to get to those problems early, and I think this is a very good way [to do it]," Johnson said.

Schools with the highest percentage of students on free and reduced-price lunch programs would be first in line to receive a share of the grant money.

The \$3.2 million in the education bill would be enough to fund expanded kindergarten in about 45 schools throughout the state. At least 75 percent of students at all of those schools receive free or reduced-price lunches.

Schools receiving grant funds would decide whether to use the money for all-day kindergarten programs or to initiate half-day kindergarten for 4-year-olds, which would put kids in the classroom a year earlier than usual.

Many of the kindergarten proposals in the omnibus bill came from a separate bill

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*"We wanted to continue on the path we started last year. We're looking at technology, accountability, discipline, and early intervention."*

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—Rep. Alice Johnson

and community organizations that operate after-school programs giving children access to computers.

The program was included in the governor's education proposals and was part of a separate bill (HF2118) sponsored by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel).

## All-day kindergarten

The bill includes a provision crafted to ensure that disadvantaged children are ready for first grade by having them spend more time in a kindergarten classroom.

Under the bill, \$3.2 million in grant funding would allow certain schools to offer full-day kindergarten or to provide half-day kindergarten for 4-year-olds.

(HF2147) sponsored by Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls).

## Afternoon activities

Children in some of the state's poorest areas would be the beneficiaries of \$2.5 million included in the bill for after-school programs.

The governor, in his January State of the State Address, identified after-school enrichment programs as a top spending priority.

Carlson requested \$5 million to finance after-school programs in Minneapolis and St. Paul neighborhoods with especially high rates of poverty, teen pregnancy, and juvenile crime.

The House bill would spend half of that

amount on a pilot program to provide grant funding for after-school programs run by community organizations.

Grants would go to programs in three Minneapolis and three St. Paul neighborhoods that meet criteria to be set by the Department of Children, Families, and Learning. Up to 10 percent of the grant money would go to programs in neighborhoods outside of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Children ages 8 to 13 who live in troubled neighborhoods would be the target of programs aiming to reduce juvenile crime and school behavioral problems.

The programs also would seek to increase academic achievement, school attendance, and skills in computers, the arts, and athletics.

The after-school enrichment provisions come from a separate bill (HF2251), sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove).

### Local control

The bill includes provisions that would give school sites more authority to make budget and programming decisions.

Under the proposal, school site councils would control a small share of the per-pupil revenue given to districts, and the site councils would be eligible to receive additional grant funding from the state.

"It all points to improving learning for kids," Kelley said. "It just gives a different group of people a voice as to what constitutes improved learning."

Current law allows site councils to be established, but the powers given to them depend on agreements worked out with the local school district.

Site councils usually include teachers, administrators, other school employees, students, parents, and community members.

The bill would give site councils, where they are established, control of about \$160 per pupil at the school. The money could be spent on programs, equipment, or a variety of other things.

Additionally, site councils would be eligible to receive a share of \$1.1 million in grant funding included in the bill. Grant funding would have to be used in an effort to reach performance goals.

Measurable performance goals for anything from improved test scores to increased graduation rates to reduced truancy would have to be set by the site council.

The council would be able to use grant funding of up to \$50,000 in the effort to achieve its goal.

Kelley initiated his effort to give site coun-

cils more control in a separate bill (HF2707) introduced this year.

"What you're actually getting is more democracy and not more bureaucracy," he said.

### Graduation standards

The bill includes \$1.7 million for continued development of the state's graduation rule, but the bill would narrow the scope of the proposed standards.

The state has spent about \$20 million developing and testing the new graduation standards.

Requirements for reading and math proficiency are slated to take effect beginning with the ninth-grade class in 1996-97. Those students will have to meet math and reading requirements before they can receive a diploma.

Ninth graders in 1997-98 were expected to have been tested on writing and science standards in addition to the math and reading requirements. Other tests in government, geography, and physical health and safety were expected to follow.

But the omnibus education bill would change that.

Minimum proficiency tests would be limited to the subjects of math, reading, and writing.

Assessment of performance in the other subjects would be shifted from minimum standards testing to the Profile of Learning, a broad analysis of each student's overall performance.

The changes in the graduation standards follow the direction taken in recent months by the newly created Department of Children, Families, and Learning.

Johnson described the standards as a method to ensure school accountability because the standards will demonstrate whether schools are doing their job.

"I believe that is what the public is expecting out of the graduation rule," she said.

### Creative discipline

The bill includes \$300,000 to help schools address behavior problems before they get out of hand.

The money would be distributed in grants to schools that implement constructive discipline policies that are focused on early intervention.

The bill would encourage schools to engage parents in a collaborative effort to alter inappropriate behavior and to see that such misbehavior does not become chronic.

It also would encourage schools to penalize students for misbehavior but to work

toward returning them to their regular classrooms.

Grant recipients would be required to remove from regular classrooms students who violate the school's conduct code, to provide an alternative education site within the school for those students, and to make the alternative education constructive.

The grant program was originally proposed in a separate bill (HF3033) sponsored by Johnson.

### Easy expulsion

The omnibus bill includes a provision that would make it easier to expel students who step out of line at school.

Schools would be able to expel students who violate sexual, religious, or racial harassment policies or other school conduct policy.

Ness said the measure is intended to make it clear that school attendance is a privilege and not a right.

Under the bill, school districts would have to hold a hearing before a student could be expelled, unless the student's parents waive that right. A decision to expel could be appealed to the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families, and Learning.

After a student is expelled, the pupil and parents would have 30 days to get the student admitted to another school. Failing that, the school district would take over and place the student in a public school in another district or in a private school.

The expulsion provisions are similar to those in a separate bill (HF2544) sponsored by Ness.

### Gang resistance

Finally, the bill would allow existing tax revenue to pay for education programs that teach children how to resist gangs.

Currently, school districts can collect an extra \$1 per resident in taxes to help pay for school police officers and drug abuse prevention programs.

The optional levy provides funding for efforts such as the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program, which teaches fifth and sixth graders about the dangers of drugs.

The education bill would simply expand the law to allow districts to pay for gang-resistance education with money collected through the tax.

A similar proposal was included in a separate bill (HF2495), sponsored by Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul).

—Nick Healy

Bonding proposal . . .

## Deteriorating State Capitol needs extensive repairs

The masterful combination of art and architecture that is the Minnesota State Capitol carried a hefty price tag for turn-of-the-century times.

It cost \$4.5 million to fulfill St. Paul architect Cass Gilbert's vision for the state's third capitol building.

More than 90 years later, that amount of money would hardly cover one of the large-scale maintenance projects required to keep the building structurally sound and aesthetically pleasing.

"It is going to cost more than traditional repair because it is a uniquely designed building," said Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters). "I think most people want to keep this unique building in good condition."

Kalis chairs the House Capital Investment Committee, which will decide this year if bonds should be sold to raise revenue for a proposed \$12.7 million in repairs to the Capitol.

### Ninety years ago

Original construction of the Capitol spanned more than five years and, under Gilbert's watchful eye, was completed in 1905. The building easily outdistanced its predecessors in size and grandeur.

The state's first Capitol, a relatively modest two-story brick building at the corner of Tenth and Cedar streets in downtown St. Paul, was destroyed by fire in 1881.

A second Capitol was completed in 1883 on the same site, but the building was instantly unpopular because of overcrowding and poor ventilation.

About a decade later, a seven-member citizen panel dubbed the Board of State Capitol Commissioners selected a hilltop site just outside the downtown core for the new Capitol.

Gilbert's design for the structure was eventually selected from a pool of entries from across the nation, and the architect set about the task of building a structure he hoped would serve as a source of pride for Minnesotans.

Since the Capitol's completion, other government buildings have been built on the Capitol grounds. The city has since grown around the Capitol, and an interstate highway now runs between the building and downtown.

To the casual observer, the Capitol appears

to have weathered well. But deferred maintenance, combined with years of wear and tear, has left the building with multiple problems that demand remedies.

"Minnesotans have been lucky so far that it isn't in worse shape than it is," said Mary Duroche, a planner for the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB).

### Capitol caretakers

The CAAPB was established in 1967 to guide maintenance and repair of public and ceremonial areas in the Capitol (including the House, Senate, and Supreme Court chambers, the governor's reception room, and the rotunda) and to oversee use of the surrounding grounds.

The commission did not consider design plans for the structures. The result was construction of two modern (and some say ugly) office buildings. Legislators took the brunt of the criticism surrounding the addition of the buildings to the Capitol area landscape.

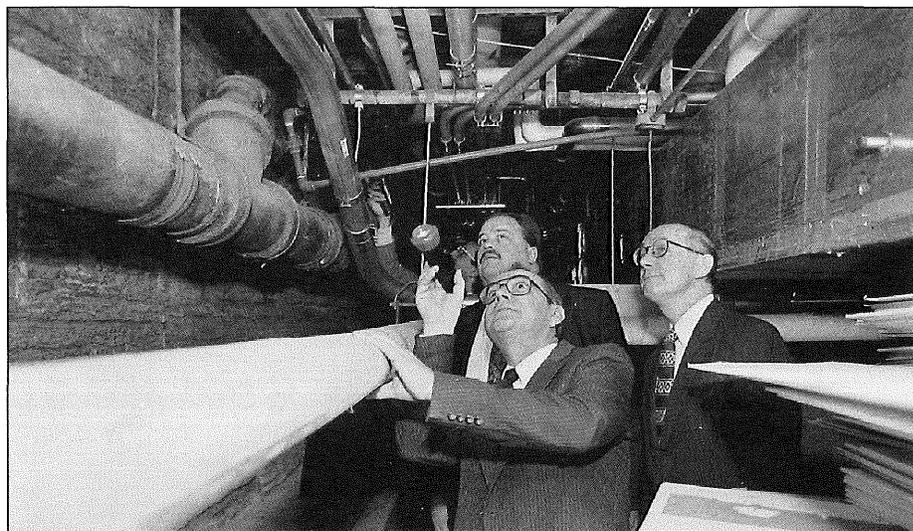
Lawmakers still decide which projects should be undertaken at the Capitol and how much should be spent on the work. But the planning board provides a cohesive, long-range strategy for work on the building and grounds.

### Renovation projects

In recent years, the board has initiated several highly visible renovation projects at the Capitol.

The 1994 Legislature passed a bonding bill that provided about \$5 million to repair the Capitol roof and exterior and to restore the Quadriga — the golden horses atop the building.

The new Capitol roof was completed in 1995, and the Quadriga also was returned to its perch after about a year's absence.



Rep. Henry Kalis, with flashlight, Rep. Greg Davids, left, background, Rep. Jerry Dempsey, right, and other members of the House Capital Investment Committee looked Feb. 5 at rusty steel girders holding up the Capitol. Replacement of the girders is expected to be part of the House's 1996 bonding bill.

Prior to the creation of the board, legislators assumed more responsibility for care of the Capitol, and an advisory commission aided in land-use decisions for the Capitol complex.

That commission approved plans to build the Transportation Building (1956) and the Centennial Office Building (1958) on Capitol grounds in decisions based purely on land-use issues.

The 10,000-pound statuary — placed above the Capitol's main entrance in 1907 — is the work of Edward C. Potter, a noted sculptor of animals, and Daniel Chester French, who created the seated Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Age and weather led to deterioration of the Quadriga's internal steel supports and its gilded coat. The statuary was restored and



The Quadriga, the golden horses and carriage atop the State Capitol, was returned to its perch in June 1995 after a year-long repair. Age and weather had eroded the Quadriga's internal steel supports and the gilded coat of the structure as well.

regilded by a Connecticut company at a cost in excess of \$600,000.

This year the board is seeking about \$12.7 million in bonding funds largely to repair deteriorating structural elements. (Gov. Arne Carlson recommended that \$4.8 million be included in the 1996 bonding bill for Capitol projects.)

Duroche identified two top priorities in the board's proposal: replacement of corroded support structure under the terraces that ring the Capitol and repair of cracking stone surfaces in the lantern atop the Capitol dome.

Serious damage to the terrace support structures was discovered during 1994 construction of accessibility ramps at the south carriage entry on the Capitol's ground floor.

Water leaking through stones from above

corroded some of the support beams so badly that even a moderate swing of a hammer could knock a hole through the rusted steel.

Subsequent inspections showed moderate to heavy damage to the beams supporting terraces on all sides of the building. The board is seeking \$7.2 million to revamp the terraces.

Trouble with the terrace supports is one more example of the problems caused by weather and water, according to Kalis.

Extreme weather conditions increase the likelihood leaks will develop, he said, and that can lead to serious damage to the building's structural and decorative elements.

Another \$1.4 million is being sought this year to repair the lantern, the 39-foot tall columned structure that sits atop the Capitol dome.

Topped by a gold gilded roof and an ornamental ball, the lantern features 12 columns clad with marble and precast concrete panels. Inspections conducted during 1994 and 1995 revealed serious cracking in the stone and marble pieces and in the joints between them.

The planning board also has developed long-range plans for bond-funded repairs and renovations to the Capitol. Duroche hopes the building will be in tip-top shape for its centennial in 2005.

"It would be kind of nice to give it a second chance," she said.

### Looking to the future

Plans call for a 1998 bonding proposal to fund restoration of the Capitol cafeteria (once a unique spot fashioned after a German rathskeller) and to pay for work to re-open the east carriage entrance and east ground floor corridor. Both closed long ago to make way for additional office and storage space.

The board plans to seek funding in 2000 to upgrade the Capitol's mechanical and electrical systems and to rehabilitate the east wing. Plans call for subsequent bonding requests to fund restoration of all public corridors (2002) and restoration of the rotunda (2004).

The needs of the Capitol may seem costly and many, but Kalis contends repairing and maintaining the building should be of vital interest to lawmakers and others.

"That building really signifies Minnesota," he said. "Our forefathers had the courage to build a very ceremonial building, and I believe that we have to have the courage to keep it in good condition."

— Nick Healy

## Minnesota State Agencies

Agriculture ..... 297-2200  
 Commerce ..... 296-4026  
 Corrections ..... 642-0200  
 Education ..... 296-6104  
 Employee Relations ..... 297-1184  
 Job Information ..... 296-2616  
 Finance ..... 296-5900  
 Gaming  
 Gambling Control Division... 639-4000  
 MN State Lottery Division .... 635-8100  
 Toll Free ..... 1-800-475-4000  
 MN Racing Commission ..... 341-7555  
 Health ..... 623-5000

Human Rights ..... 296-5663  
 Toll Free ..... 1-800-657-3704  
 Human Services ..... 296-6117  
 Economic Security ..... 296-3711  
 Labor and Industry ..... 296-6107  
 Military Affairs ..... 282-4662  
 Natural Resources ..... 296-6157  
 Public Safety ..... 296-6642  
 Driver and Vehicle Services .. 296-6911  
 Fire Marshal ..... 643-3080  
 Liquor Control ..... 296-6159  
 State Patrol ..... 297-3935  
 Pollution Control ..... 296-6300

Public Service ..... 296-7107  
 Revenue  
 Taxpayer Assistance ..... 296-3781  
 Toll Free ..... 1-800-652-9094  
 Trade and  
 Economic Development ..... 297-1291  
 Office of Tourism ..... 296-5029  
 Transportation ..... 296-3000  
 Veterans Affairs ..... 296-2562  
**State Information ..... 296-6013**  
 House Information ..... 296-2146  
 Senate Information ..... 296-0504



Visiting the Minnesota State Capitol complex can be a rewarding and educational experience for everyone. There are buildings to explore and tours to take almost any time you choose to visit. And when the Legislature is in session during the first part of every year, there are floor sessions to observe, committee meetings to attend, and legislators to meet. Remember that this is your state Capitol, and you are always welcome.

## How to get here

### Location

The Capitol complex is to the north of I-94 just minutes from downtown St. Paul. It is accessible from the east and west on I-94, and from the north and south on I-35E.

**I-94 eastbound:** Exit at Marion Street. Turn left. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

**I-94 westbound:** Exit at Marion Street. Turn right. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

**I-35E northbound:** Exit at Kellogg Boulevard. Turn left. Go to John Ireland Boulevard and turn right. Metered parking spaces line both sides of the boulevard.

**I-35E southbound:** Exit at University Avenue. Turn right. Go to Rice Street and turn left. Go one block and turn left to enter Parking Lot D.

### Parking

Public metered parking is available in Lot Q, north of the Capitol at Cedar Street and Sherburne Avenue; Lot D, next to the State Office Building off Rice Street on Aurora Avenue; and on the orange level of the Centennial Office Building Ramp at Cedar Street and Constitution Avenue. All-day parking is available in Lot Q and in the Centennial Office Building Ramp. Capitol Security personnel will issue tickets for expired parking.

Outdoor handicapped parking is available in Lot N, which is directly behind the Capitol; in Lot D, which is off Rice Street on Aurora Avenue; and in Lot F, which is directly behind the Transportation Building.

Indoor handicapped parking is available on the lower level of the State Office Building Ramp (use the call box at the ramp entrance to gain entry); on the blue level of the Centennial Office Building Ramp; and on

the entry level of the Administration Building Ramp (two stalls).

There soon will be two handicapped entrances to the Capitol. One is on the north side of the building, just off Lot N; the other, a drop-off entrance under the south portico at the front of the building, is scheduled to open Feb. 29.

Since parking is limited during legislative sessions, busing may be easier. Freeway express bus service is available. Bus number 94B takes you to the Capitol and the State Office Building. Call the Transit Information Center at (612) 349-7000 for schedule and route information.

## What to do

### Tours

Tours of the Capitol are offered through the Capitol Historic Site Program of the Minnesota Historical Society.

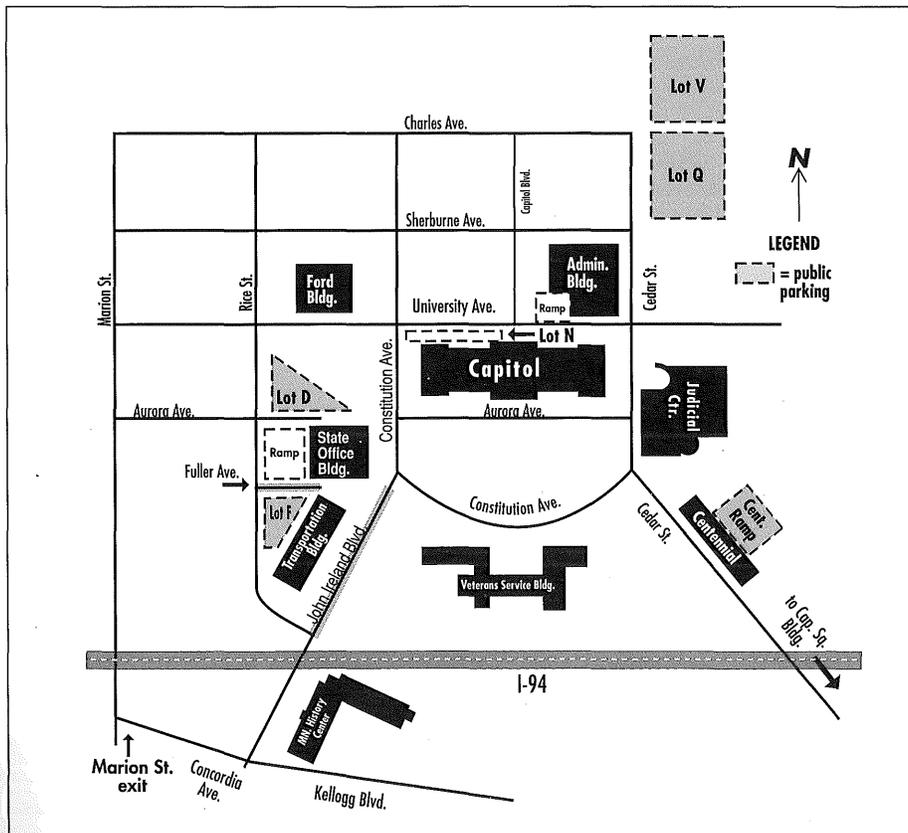
Tour guides lead the 45-minute tours on the hour Mondays through Fridays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (last tour leaves at 4 p.m.); Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.); and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.). The tours are free of charge and begin at the Capitol's information desk at the end of the corridor to the right of the main entrance. Brochures in about 15 foreign languages also are available there.

Tour participants may request customized tours that emphasize either the building's art and architecture or state government. Also, tours can be customized for senior citizens or grade school students.

The society offers "Voice of the People: Your Role in Minnesota Government," a half-day educational session for students in grades 7-12.

Historical society officials ask that groups of 10 or more call at least two weeks in advance to reserve a tour time.

For more information about the tours or to reserve a time, call the Capitol Historic Site Program, (612) 296-2881.



## Legislative sessions

Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate debate bills when the Legislature is in session.

At the beginning of a legislative session, the pace of floor sessions is generally slow as new bills are assigned to committees and non-controversial items are discussed. At about the session's midpoint, however, the legislative pace quickens.

The House meets at 2:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays, and the Senate meets at 10 a.m. Mondays and at 8 a.m. Thursdays during the first few weeks. House floor sessions are scheduled for the afternoon because committees meet in the morning and early afternoon. As the session nears the end, however, both bodies may meet several times a day, often into the night.

All House and Senate floor sessions are open to the public. Visitors interested in observing these sessions may call the House Chief Clerk's Office, (612) 296-2314, or Senate Information, (612) 296-0504, with questions. Spectators may sit in the galleries of either chamber.

## Committee meetings

Committees still consider bills several weeks after the session starts. Visitors wanting to attend a committee meeting may call the committee hotlines for prerecorded messages with the meeting times and agendas for each day: House, (612) 296-9283; Senate, (612) 296-8088. Printed agendas for the week also appear in each issue of the *Session Weekly* and the *Senate Briefly*.

Committee meetings are open to the public. When a public hearing is scheduled the committee may listen to comments from the audience (when time permits) in addition to the scheduled speakers. Committees have different policies on hearing testimony depending upon their size and workload. Some committees hear general testimony at the subcommittee level, while others allow general testimony during meetings of the full committee. Informational handouts that committee members receive during meetings or hearings are considered public information and are available to the audience on a first-come, first-served basis.

Major proposals on issues such as open enrollment or groundwater legislation often have several public hearings so committee members may listen to all arguments for and against a bill.

Each committee has a chair, vice chair, administrator, and legislative assistant. A list of committees and members is available in the

House Public Information Office in Room 175 of the State Office Building or the Senate Information Office in Room 231 of the State Capitol.

Groups and individuals wishing to testify before a committee should call the appropriate committee's legislative assistant well in advance of the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda. Committees prefer requests one week in advance but will accept later notification when unexpected issues appear on the committee schedule. A brochure containing tips on testifying at legislative committee hearings is available from the House Public Information Office.

## Legislators

Representatives are busy but look forward to meeting with their constituents. You should contact your legislator's office to set up an appointment.

## Dining

All buildings in the Capitol complex have their own cafeterias. The Capitol and State Office Building cafeterias are in the basement. The Transportation and Centennial buildings' cafeterias are on the ground floor of each building. The Veterans Service Building cafeteria is on the fifth floor, and the Capitol Square Building's dining area is on the lower level. The Capitol also has a snack bar on the second floor (where the House and Senate chambers are located) during the session. The Café Minnesota is on the first level of the new Minnesota History Center. All cafeterias serve breakfast and lunch.

## Group visits

Sometimes groups plan a "legislative day" at the Capitol in order to express a particular viewpoint to legislators.

Rooms for special conferences or speakers can be reserved by calling Betty Langenberger, (612) 296-5974, room scheduler for the State Office Building; or Marilyn Hall, (612) 296-0866, or Marge Collins, (612) 296-4154, both room schedulers for the Capitol Building.

If group members would like to meet with their individual legislators or testify before a committee (see "Committee meetings"), arrangements should be made at least a week in advance.

Oftentimes, such groups have members wear a distinctive name tag or badge to indicate their concern about a particular issue.

Groups planning a trip to the Capitol should remember that seating is fairly limited in some committee rooms — particularly when the topic is controversial.

## Where to find information

### House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building  
(612) 296-2146 or  
1-800-657-3550

**Committee schedule:** The *Session Weekly* includes the upcoming week's schedule, and the office has a prerecorded message, (612) 296-9283, that provides up-to-date information on meeting agendas, times, and locations.

**Legislator information:** The office has a complete listing of telephone and room numbers for the representatives.

**Informational brochures:** Many brochures for all ages are available at no charge.

### Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol  
(612) 296-2314

**Copies of bills:** This office provides copies of bills at no charge, all agendas for House sessions, and the *Journal of the House*.

### House Index Department

211 State Capitol  
(612) 296-6646

**Bills:** The House Index Department, a part of the Chief Clerk's Office, has a computerized index available for public use. House Index lists bills by committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories.

**Bill status:** House Index can also tell you the current status of legislation.

### Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol  
(612) 296-0504

This office is responsible for all information about the Senate, including the committee schedule, bill status, legislator information, and the distribution of bill copies.

### Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol  
(612) 296-0264

This bipartisan office produces television programs, multi-media production, scriptwriting, photography and graphics. It offers live coverage of the Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings.

### Public Access Computer Room

181 State Office Building  
The room houses computers that the public may use to obtain legislative information on a variety of subjects.

# Bill Introductions

HF3164-HF3213

## Monday, Feb. 12

**HF3164—Schumacher (DFL)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
Benton County landfill cleanup provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3165—Ozment (R)**  
**Judiciary**  
Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, and Washington county attorneys required to provide prosecution services for nonfelony violations in certain small cities.

**HF3166—Huntley (DFL)**  
**Health & Human Services**  
Human Services intermediate care facility reimbursement county geographic designation provisions modified.

**HF3167—Sarna (DFL)**  
**Economic Development, Infrastructure & Regulation Finance**  
Ethanol-blended gasoline study provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3168—Murphy (DFL)**  
**Judiciary Finance**  
State agency violence prevention plans and impact statements required, and money appropriated.

**HF3169—McGuire (DFL)**  
**Financial Institutions & Insurance**  
Insurance fraud prohibited, enforcement provided, and penalties prescribed.

**HF3170—Girard (R)**  
**Financial Institutions & Insurance**  
Credit union place of business location changes authorized.

**HF3171—Tuma (R)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources**  
Mill Towns Trail established in Rice, Dakota, and Goodhue counties.

**HF3172—Rest (DFL)**  
**Transportation & Transit**  
Trunk Highway No. 100 reconstruction priority established.

**HF3173—Rest (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Sales and use tax refund time limit provisions modified, sales tax advisory council duration extended, used farm machinery sales tax exemption extended permanently, and capital equipment tax rate reduction and exemption provided.

**HF3174—Clark (DFL)**  
**Health & Human Services**  
Birth defect surveillance system project appropriated money.

**HF3175—Rest (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
County capital improvement bonding authority duration extended.

**HF3176—Bettermann (R)**  
**Education**  
Public school attendance option policy established.

**HF3177—Weaver (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Coon Rapids tax increment financing district established, and requirement exemption provided.

**HF3178—Johnson, V. (R)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
Retiring farmer farm transfer pilot project established, and money appropriated.

**HF3179—Pugh (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Property tax referendum notice information requirements modified.

**HF3180—Murphy (DFL)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
Snowmobile trails and enforcement account grants-in-aid provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3181—Dorn (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Unsold pulltab and tipboard ticket tax refund or credit provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3182—Winter (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Unsold pulltab and tipboard ticket tax refund or credit provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3183—Dehler (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Unsold pulltab and tipboard ticket tax refund or credit provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3184—Kinkel (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Unsold pulltab and tipboard ticket tax refund or credit provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3185—Rukavina (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Unsold pulltab and tipboard ticket tax refund or credit provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3186—Tomassoni (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Unsold pulltab and tipboard ticket tax refund or credit provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3187—Entenza (DFL)**  
**Education**  
Student Bill of Rights Task Force established to develop effective learning rights and responsibilities.

**HF3188—Cooper (DFL)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**  
University of Minnesota appropriated money for an anaerobic digestion demonstration unit, and bonds issued.

**HF3189—Carlson, L. (DFL)**  
**Education**  
Higher education appropriation restrictions removed.

**HF3190—Jennings (DFL)**  
**Economic Development, Infrastructure & Regulation Finance**  
Northwest Company Fur Post Interpretive Center construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

**HF3191—Peterson (DFL)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources**  
Lac Qui Parle Lake boundary dispute resolved by natural resources commissioner.

**HF3192—Johnson, V. (R)**  
**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Snowmobile grooming grants-in-aid provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3193—Murphy (DFL)**  
**Capital Investment**  
Correctional facility improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

**HF3194—Murphy (DFL)**  
**Judiciary Finance**  
Probation officer caseload reduction provided, and money appropriated.

**HF3195—Murphy (DFL)**  
**Judiciary Finance**  
Community Corrections Act county fund allocation provisions modified.

**HF3196—Murphy (DFL)**  
**Health & Human Services**  
Medical Assistance program institutionalized spouse income treatment provisions modified.

**HF3197—Anderson, R. (DFL)**  
**Education**  
Independent School District No. 545, Henning, special levy provided.

**HF3198—Brown (DFL)**  
**Capital Investment**  
Omnibus environment and natural resources capital improvements bill, and bonds issued.

**HF3199—Greenfield (DFL)**  
**Capital Investment**  
Omnibus human services infrastructure capital improvements bill, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

## Thursday, Feb. 15

**HF3200—Worke (R)**  
**Taxes**  
Owatonna tax increment housing district financing requirements modified.

**HF3201—Olson, E. (DFL)**  
**Taxes**  
Homestead property treatment extended to property owned by individuals required to occupy a residence provided by their employers.

**HF3202—Finseth (R)**  
**Taxes**  
County gravel crushing sales tax exemption provided.

**HF3203—Rest (DFL)****Taxes**

Corporate franchise tax credit provided for participation in certain job training programs.

**HF3204—Rest (DFL)****Taxes**

Low income rental housing property taxation provisions modified.

**HF3205—Munger (DFL)****Environment & Natural Resources**

St. Louis river board established, and powers, duties, and membership requirements provided.

**HF3206—Kahn (DFL)****Governmental Operations**

State high school league governing board appointing authority modified.

**HF3207—Schumacher (DFL)****Governmental Operations**

Legislative toll-free telephone service established, and money appropriated.

**HF3208—Winter (DFL)****Environment & Natural Resources**

Deer; extended muzzleloader deer hunting season repealed.

**HF3209—Larsen (R)****Local Government****& Metropolitan Affairs**

Municipal annexation and detachment order statewide moratorium imposed.

**HF3210—Rukavina (DFL)****Governmental Operations**

Gambling Control Board granted license issuance, renewal, and revocation authority.

**HF3211—Milbert (DFL)****Taxes**

Indoor ice arena construction material sales tax exemption extended.

**HF3212—Perlt (DFL)****Taxes**

Woodbury tax increment financing district duration provisions modified.

**HF3213—Rest (DFL)****Taxes**

Seasonal recreational property tax class rate reduced.

There's more than one Charles Lindbergh in Minnesota's past.

The one that most people can readily identify is Charles Lindbergh Jr. — Lucky Lindy, the fearless pilot who thrilled the world with the first solo transatlantic airplane flight in 1927.

But before Charles Augustus Lindbergh Jr. came Charles Augustus Lindbergh Sr.: Lucky Lindy's father, a five-term U.S. representative from Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District, a staunch champion of the farmer and the laborer, and a stalwart supporter of politics' progressive movement.

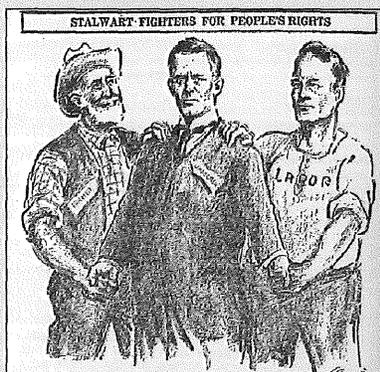
Though he was overshadowed by the exploits of his famous son, the elder Lindbergh played a significant role in the development of Minnesotan and American reform politics.

He was born Jan. 20, 1859, in Stockholm, Sweden, and immigrated with his parents to the United States a year later. They settled on a farm near Melrose, Minn., and Charles Augustus — later to be known most familiarly as C.A. — graduated from St. Cloud Normal School and earned a law degree from the University of Michigan.

Lindbergh began practicing law in Little Falls, Minn., where he also worked on the family farm. He served as Morrison County's prosecuting attorney from 1891-1893.

In 1907, Lindbergh, already an outspoken critic of money and banking, insurgency, and the farmer's plight, ran successfully for his first term as a U.S. representative from Minnesota. He was elected to four more successive terms

## Do you know?



Before Charles Lindbergh Jr. — Lucky Lindy, the fearless pilot who was the first to fly solo over the Atlantic in 1927 — there was his father, Charles Augustus Lindbergh Sr. The senior Lindbergh was a five-term U.S. representative from Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District.

From the *Minnesota Leader*, June 1, 1918.  
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

before abandoning the U.S. House to seek a U.S. Senate seat. He was unsuccessful in that quest, and also failed to win the governor's office in Minnesota.

Many disliked Lindbergh for his opposition to American involvement in World War I, a position that earned him the epithet "Communist" from his detractors. He would not compromise his beliefs to gain votes; his steadfast refusal to back down, and his commitment to progressive politics, contributed to the birth of the Republican Party's progressive wing, the Non-partisan League and the Farmer-La-

bor Party.

Bruce L. Larson, who wrote *Lindbergh of Minnesota: A Political Biography* in 1971, suggests that it might have been Lindbergh's inability to dissemble that kept him from further political success.

"A reserved, serious, lawyerlike person, Lindbergh was an unlikely prospect for political success," Larson wrote. "He was not a spellbinding speaker. His campaign style was not flamboyant.

"The image of the stubborn Swede was true for Lindbergh as a politician. His adamant refusal, for example, to compromise on issues and policies no doubt inhibited his political career somewhat. The total commitment of the man to his views and his people, however, more than offset any disadvantages.

"People would listen to his long discourses for two hours in the hot sun, probably not understanding the meaning of all his words, yet convinced that he knew what he was talking about and that he had a good plan for the common people."

C.A. Lindbergh died in 1924, having left an enduring mark on Minnesota's political landscape.

"C.A. Lindbergh could be nothing but what he was," Larson wrote. "His career clearly demonstrated the depth of his convictions and the absence of merely personal ambition. Time and again he opposed the way things were and proposed specific change without a thought to what it would do to his own political future."

# Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.  
For information updates, call House Calls at (612) 296-9283. All meetings are open to the public.

To have the daily and weekly schedules delivered to your e-mail address, send a message to:

[listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us](mailto:listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us)

In the body of the message type:

**subscribe h-schedules**

## MONDAY, Feb. 19

8 a.m.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE & REGULATION FINANCE

300N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Jim Rice

**Agenda:** HF2294 (Opatz) Relating to economic development; providing for transfer of assets and liabilities of Minnesota Business Finance, Inc.; appropriating money.

HF2668 (Anderson, I.) Relating to cold weather research, requiring a study of cold weather research needs; appropriating money to the commissioner of trade and economic development.

Other bills to be announced.

### Health & Human Services Finance Division/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Lee Greenfield

**Agenda:** Budget allocations.

### Property Tax & Tax Increment Financing Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Ted Winter

**Agenda:** HF1725 (Otremba) Providing for assessment of platted land in certain municipalities.

HF2119 (Boudreau) Reorganization, administration and operation of a Rice County hospital district.

HF2299 (Rukavina) Allocation among governmental units of increases in the assessed value of C/I property within the taconite relief area.

HF2665 (Koppendrayner) Allowing county boards to allow abatements for economic development.

HF2458 (Kelley) Providing for self-executing special service district procedures.

HF2593 (Jennings) Modifying powers of sanitary districts.

HF2605 (Dauner) Collection of revenues by watershed districts.

HF2718 (Jefferson) Shorter period for the purchase of tax forfeited property.

HF2830 (Sviggum) Setting a permanent taconite production tax.

HF2884 (Dawkins) Reducing county property tax by funding fiscal year cost shifts for state takeover of income maintenance programs.

HF3027 (Dawkins) Extending the St. Paul Rental Tax Equity Program.

HF3059 (Osskopp) Providing for payment in lieu of taxes for certain acquired natural resource lands.

HF3142 (Goodno) Extending the duration of border city enterprise zones.

HF3145 (Winter) Wind energy property taxes.

HF3179 (Pugh) Requiring additional truth in taxation information on proposed notices for pending referendums.

### Sales & Income Tax Division/TAXES

500S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Bob Milbert

**Agenda:** HF2814 (Winter) Increasing the sales tax on alcoholic beverages; dedicating a portion to a chemical dependency treatment account.

HF3143 (Bertram) Tax on pre-mixed alcoholic beverages.

HF3050 (Milbert) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3075 (Wenzel) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3181 (Dorn) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3182 (Winter) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3183 (Dehler) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3184 (Kinkel) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3185 (Rukavina) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3186 (Tomassoni) Tax refund on unsold pulltabs.

HF3203 (Rest) Tax credit for certain employee training and retention.

HF3211 (Milbert) Extending the sales tax exemption for construction materials used in building certain ice facilities.

### University of Minnesota Finance Division/ EDUCATION

300S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Becky Kelso

**Agenda:** 1996 supplemental appropriations bill.

8:30 a.m.

### ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room  
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Chuck Brown

**Agenda:** HF3180 (Murphy) Relating to snowmobiles.

HF2031 (Ness) Relating to ag. food license.

HF2126 (Gunther) Relating to ag. food license.

HF2594 (Munger) Relating to frogs.

HF2547 (Cooper) Relating to agriculture; passing on the farm.

HF2512 (Johnson, V.) Relating to game and fish; emergency deterrent materials.

HF2746 (Otremba) Relating to agriculture; research on potato blight.

HF2227 (Trimble) Natural resources grant.

HF1661 (Clark) A study of environmental justice.

10 a.m.

### JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room  
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy

**Agenda:** HF2604 (Pugh) Recalled judge service authorized for judges who have resigned in good standing, and law practice admission examination fee set by Minnesota Supreme Court.

HF3194 (Murphy) Probation officer caseload reduction provided, and money appropriated.

HF3195 (Murphy) Community corrections act county fund allocation provisions modified.

HF2041 (Wejzman) Peace officer community policing training required (contingent upon action by the Judiciary Committee).

HF2303 (Greenfield) Human services and health care provider criminal background check provisions reconciled (contingent upon action by the Judiciary Committee).

HF2161 (Skoglund) Omnibus Crime Bill.

Working group recommendations. (This meeting will continue after session in room 500N State Office Building.)

Working group recommendations. (This meeting will continue after session in room 500N State Office Building.)

Working group recommendations. (This meeting will continue after session in room 500N State Office Building.)

### State Government Finance Division/ GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

400S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Tom Rukavina

**Agenda:** Omnibus State Government Finance Bill.

12:30 p.m.

### GENERAL LEGISLATION, VETERANS AFFAIRS & ELECTIONS

300N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Loren Jennings

**Agenda:** SF153 (Reichgott Junge); HF343 (McCollum) Proposing an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution; providing for recall of elected state officers.

2:15 p.m.

### RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

118 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Phil Carruthers

**Agenda:** Special Orders. Any other business.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

After Session

**WAYS & MEANS**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg  
**Agenda:** HF2902 (Bakk) Emergency deer feeding appropriation.

4 p.m.

**Higher Education Finance Division/  
EDUCATION**

300S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Tony Kinkel  
**Agenda:** HF1170 (Kelley) Distance learning. 1996 supplemental appropriations bill.

**TUESDAY, Feb. 20**

8 a.m.

**Health & Human Services Finance Division/  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Lee Greenfield  
**Agenda:** Budget allocations.

**Higher Education Finance Division/  
EDUCATION**

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Tony Kinkel  
**Agenda:** Final action on 1996 supplemental appropriations bill.

**JUDICIARY FINANCE**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy  
**Agenda:** Continuation of Feb. 19 agenda, if necessary. Allocations. (If session is scheduled, this meeting will continue after session.)

**Transportation Finance Division/  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
INFRASTRUCTURE &  
REGULATION FINANCE**

500S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Bernie Lieder  
**Agenda:** HF3137 (Lieder) Appropriating money for metropolitan area and transportation purposes.

8:30 a.m.

**ENVIRONMENT &  
NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room  
State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Chuck Brown  
**Agenda:** Continuation of Feb. 19 agenda, if needed.  
Additional bills may be added.

10 a.m.

**CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

500N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Henry Kalis  
**Agenda:** HF2058 (Carlson, L.) College savings bonds.  
HF3198 (Brown) Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee bonding recommendations.

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Bob Anderson  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

**State Government Finance Division/  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS**

400S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Tom Rukavina  
**Agenda:** Omnibus state government finance bill.

**TAXES**

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest  
**Agenda:** HF2417 (Jefferson) omnibus pension bill.  
HF3055 (Long) MHFA low-income tax credit changes.  
HF2156 (Johnson, A.) omnibus education finance bill.

2 p.m.

**Legislative Commission on Pensions and  
Retirement**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Richard Jefferson  
**Agenda:** Summary of 1995 actuarial valuations for the statewide and major local public pension plans, Thomas Custis, F.S.A., consulting actuary, Milliman & Robertson, Inc. Other items may be added by chair.

4 p.m.

**University of Minnesota Finance Division/  
EDUCATION**

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Becky Kelso  
**Agenda:** Final action on 1996 supplemental appropriations bill.

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 21**

8 a.m.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
INFRASTRUCTURE &  
REGULATION FINANCE**

300N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Jim Rice  
**Agenda:** Committee omnibus bill.

**EDUCATION**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Lyndon Carlson  
**Agenda:** Higher education finance bills.

**Health & Human Services Finance Division/  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Lee Greenfield  
**Agenda:** Budget allocations.

**JUDICIARY FINANCE**

500N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy  
**Agenda:** Allocations.

8:30 a.m.

**ENVIRONMENT &  
NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room  
State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Chuck Brown  
**Agenda:** Omnibus supplemental allocations.

10 a.m.

**CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Henry Kalis  
**Agenda:** Bonding recommendations from the following:  
Higher Education Division (HF3038), Economic Development, Infrastructure & Regulation Finance Committee, State Government Finance Division.

**State Government Finance Division/  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS**

400S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Tom Rukavina  
**Agenda:** Omnibus state government finance bill.

After Session

(House session may be scheduled.)

**EDUCATION**

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Lyndon Carlson  
**Agenda:** Continuation of higher education finance bills.

**THURSDAY, Feb. 22**

8 a.m.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
INFRASTRUCTURE &  
REGULATION FINANCE**

300N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Jim Rice  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

**ENVIRONMENT &  
NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room  
State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Chuck Brown  
**Agenda:** Omnibus supplemental allocations.

10 a.m.

**CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Henry Kalis  
**Agenda:** "Must Do" list.

**Government Efficiency & Oversight Division/WAYS & MEANS**

300S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Howard Orenstein  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Bob Anderson  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

**JUDICIARY FINANCE**

500N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy  
**Agenda:** Omnibus Judiciary Finance and Crime Prevention Finance Bill. (This meeting will continue after session.)

**State Government Finance Division/ GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS**

400S State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Tom Rukavina  
**Agenda:** Omnibus State Government Finance Bill.

**TAXES**

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest  
**Agenda:** HFXXXX (Rest) Low income housing reform.

12 Noon

**GENERAL LEGISLATION, VETERANS AFFAIRS & ELECTIONS**

300N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Loren Jennings  
**Agenda:** HF2974 (Rest) Providing for an advisory referendum on a metropolitan sports facility.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

After Session

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Bob Anderson  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

**WAYS & MEANS**

5 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg  
**Agenda:** Omnibus K-12 Education Finance Bill.  
HF2206 (Pelowski) Remove mandates from higher education.

**FRIDAY, Feb. 23**

8 a.m.

**JUDICIARY FINANCE**

500N State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy  
**Agenda:** Final adoption of Omnibus Judiciary Finance and Crime Prevention Finance Bill.

**TAXES**

200 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

10 State Office Building  
Chr. Rep. Bob Anderson  
**Agenda:** To be announced.

"What goes around comes around" is a phrase that often can be applied to legislative proposals.

Since July 1, 1995, every public higher education campus in Minnesota (except the U of M and its branches) has been a part of MnSCU, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. This collection of state universities and technical and community colleges is run by the Higher Education Board, a "superboard" that serves as its administrative umbrella.

In 1976, Sen. Nicholas Coleman of St. Paul, then the Senate majority leader, was calling for the same thing.

Based on the Wisconsin Board of Regents model, Coleman envisioned a "superboard" with powers to "approve, disprove, or modify budget requests . . . plan for construction or acquisition of facilities . . . for the purpose of relating present resources . . . to the state's present and long range needs."

Proponents said the move would prompt savings, cut bureaucracy, and benefit students.

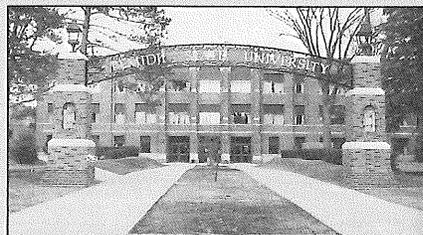
"Our state would be better served by having one voice making higher educa-

**It's a fact!**

tion requests to the Legislature. . . . We need better control of our higher education delivery system and one good way to do that is through a single, integrated group of colleges," Coleman wrote in a *Minneapolis Star* editorial.

Coleman saw the University of Minnesota as a part of this combined system as well. (A tough sell, since the territorial charter gives the U of M separate legal status that still exists in today's state constitution.)

Critics, such as Rep. Rod Searle, questioned whether such a system



A proposal to merge the state's colleges and universities, which became a reality in July 1995, was thought of more than 20 years ago.

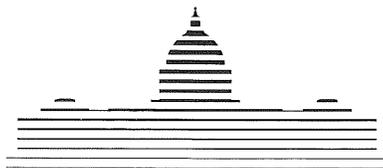
Photo from Bemidji, First City On The Mississippi

run by a "superboard" would produce the savings hailed by its supporters.

The same pro and con arguments as those heard in 1992 and 1993 were heard on the House floor during the 1995 session as representatives voted to repeal the higher education merger.

The Senate, whose majority leader, Sen. Roger Moe (DFL-Ada), was the chief architect of the merger when it passed in 1991, did not agree to the repealer.

The prophet in this evolution of the "superboard" is G. Theodore Mitau, a former chancellor of the state university system, who, in 1977, wrote: ". . . what will not go away is the urge to engage in some form of continued 'administrative engineering' with respect to the management of this state's post-secondary systems of education. Reasons for this impulse lie deep in a widely shared public concern about rising educational costs, underutilizations of plants and facilities, and doubts about the very purposes and goals of colleges and universities in a setting of shrinking resources, competing social needs and clashing priorities."



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Speaker of the House: Irv Anderson  
 Majority Leader: Phil Carruthers  
 Minority Leader: Steven A. Sviggum

## MINNESOTA INDEX

### Human rights in Minnesota

Year the state Department of Human Rights was founded .....	1967
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States, including Minnesota, that allow a person a year after an allegedly discriminatory act to file a charge of discrimination .....	8
States with a limit of 180 days or six months .....	32
States prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation .....	8
on the basis of public assistance status .....	2
Full-time staff members, state Department of Human Rights, November 1995 ....	56
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in 1995 .....	1,310
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Largest award .....	\$259,000
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Average caseload for department enforcement officers, FY1993 .....	50
in March 1995 .....	106

Sources: *Department of Human Rights, January 1996, Office of the Legislative Auditor.*

### For more information



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