

Slawik delivers on education finance, crime issues

On Feb. 6, Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood) was on the House floor listening to debate on a bill to reduce teen smoking. Four hours later, she gave birth to her own



Rep. Nora Slawik

future teenager, Victoria Anne, a healthy, 7-pound, 9-ounce baby girl. Two weeks after that blessed event, Slawik was back on the job at the Capitol, devising a study of ambulance rates in Woodbury and working on a bill to

create a statewide immunization registry for children.

Taking her child's birth in stride is just another way the 34-year-old Slawik reflects District 57A's busy working-parent constituency. In addition to the new baby, she and her husband, Brien, have a 5-year-old son, Sean. "My perspective is much the same as the people I represent," she said.

Slawik's family has roots deep in Minnesota's public life. Her grandparents lived in Benson, Minn., where her grandfather published the local newspaper, *The Swift County Monitor*. Slawik, however, was born in Tucson, Ariz., where her parents had settled.

After graduating from Arizona State University with a degree in recreation administration, Slawik took a management training position with United Way. She worked for the organization in Fort Worth, Texas, and Boulder, Colo., before accepting a fund-raising position in Minnesota. Here, in addition to working for United Way, she has helped raise money for Northwestern College, United Hospital, and St. Louis Church.

After moving to Minnesota, she married Brien Slawik, vice president of Slawik Enterprises, a property development and management firm. Brien's grandparents, Harold and Marie, developed Roseville's Har-Mar Mall.

Slawik's interest in public service grew out of her work in the nonprofit sector. "As a professional fundraiser, I've been involved in the community and helping organizations to maximize public resources. When you look at the Legislature, it is a similar process."

She also has been active in a number of community groups, including a charter board membership with the Southeast Area YMCA in Woodbury, the League of Women Voters, and the District 622 Educational Foundation.

When former Rep. Walter Perlt decided not to run for re-election last year, another former DFL House member, Pamela Neary, asked Slawik to run. Perlt agreed to chair Slawik's campaign committee.

Education financing was a big issue for the district during the fall campaign. Woodbury is the fastest growing municipality in the state and Washington County is the fastest growing county, Slawik said. "We don't have a lot of commercial property in the South Washington County School District, and we haven't been able to pass a school bonding referendum."

Slawik was one of many co-sponsors of HF1, already signed into law by the governor, which repealed the cap on state funding for K-12 public education. Her position on the Education Committee's Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Division also has put her in a good position to keep tabs on

education financing issues that may affect her district. She recently introduced a bill (HF1977) to help the South Washington County School District secure more dollars for local schools.

"Crime is also a growing concern in the district," Slawik said. "We are a first-ring suburban area, and crime is coming out of the city toward us."

Slawik's approach to crime issues is to focus on prevention programs. She has signed onto a number of anti-crime bills as a co-sponsor.

In addition to serving on the Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs and Ways and Means committees, Slawik, as vice chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, has helped shape the state's response to federal welfare reform legislation. "It's a good fit with my background in nonprofit work," she said. "I am pleased to have an opportunity to work on welfare reform. It has been the committee's biggest challenge."

— Steve Compton

District 57A

1996 population: 43,221
Largest city: Maplewood
Counties: Ramsey, Washington
Location: eastern suburbs of St. Paul
Top concern: "My district is big and it is growing. We have the urban sprawl issue, working parents, schools bursting at the seams. Woodbury is one of the fastest growing cities in the area. A lot of people are concerned about the continuous development of the countryside around them."

— Rep. Nora Slawik

Frequently called numbers

Secretary of the Senate	
231 Capitol	296-0271
Voice mail/order bills	296-2343
Chief Clerk of the House	
211 Capitol	296-2314
Index, Senate	
110 Capitol	296-2887
Index, House	
211 Capitol	296-6646
Information, Senate	
231 Capitol	296-0504
Information, House	
175 State Office Building	296-2146
Committee Hotline, Senate ...	296-8088

Committee Hotline, House	296-9283
Sergeant at Arms, Senate	
Senate Chamber	296-7159/6-1119
Sergeant at Arms, House	
45 State Office Building	296-4860
Counsel and Research, Senate	
G-17 Capitol	296-4791
Research, House	
600 State Office Building	296-6753
Legislative Reference Library	
645 State Office Building	296-3398
Revisor of Statutes	
700 State Office Building	296-2868

Governor's Office	
130 Capitol	296-3391
Attorney General's Office	
102 Capitol	296-6196
Secretary of State's Office	
180 State Office Building	296-9208
Capitol Security	
B-4 Capitol	296-6741
Emergency	296-2100
TTY*, Senate	296-0250
Toll free	1-888-234-1216
TTY*, House	296-9896
Toll free	1-800-657-3550