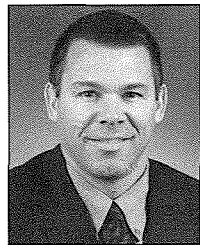


The deficit is top priority

Kelly promotes fiscal responsibility

By KRIS BERGGREN

Rep. Tim Kelly's new office walls are bare, but there are some family photos of his wife and four children displayed on his desk and bookshelves. There is also a framed colored pencil drawing of a football player who appears to be intercepting a pass. It's a picture of Kelly, a former strong safety for Minnesota State University, Mankato, drawn by his son. The team won the conference championship two seasons after he graduated.



Rep. Tim Kelly

"We were in the building years," he said. Perhaps Kelly (R-Red Wing) feels similarly now, as he and his House colleagues face a

monster budget deficit that will likely take months or years to tackle. "The situation we're in is so front-page," Kelly said. "People believe government has to live within its means. That is what I heard going door to door." That's why his number one concern is fiscal responsibility.

A financial advisor, Kelly decided to run after serving on the Red Wing School Board for five years. There he wrestled with equitable funding for the district and made tough cuts "without diminishing the product."

Lifting a ban on nuclear energy is also a big priority. Kelly's father worked at the Prairie Island nuclear plant for 30 years and shared his impressions of the plant's "fantastic results" and "impeccable" safety record. Last year's spike in gas prices and current green energy concerns make nuclear energy worth

DISTRICT 28A

Population: (2007 est.) 37,899
 Largest City: Red Wing
 Counties: Goodhue, Wabasha
 Top Concern: State deficit

revisiting as a renewable, local source of energy, he said. "We should definitely look at advancing that technology and use what's there."

Kelly was reassured to hear that House members on both sides of the aisle take the "family is first" attitude seriously. Although he lives outside the 50-mile radius of the State Capitol, making him eligible for the housing per diem, Kelly commutes daily to and from his Red Wing home and, at least for now, shares carpooling duty to his children's athletic events with his wife, Sue. He's grateful to her for managing their household as an at-home parent.

"I have the easy job," he said.