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Security report: Threats lurk at the Capitol

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The State Capitol needs security upgrades. That's the conclusion of a report released on Friday by a bipartisan panel of legislators and security officials. They concluded that there are potential "threats" lurking around the Capitol complex. The group began reviewing security after U.S. Rep Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., was shot during a public appearance in January.

The Minnesota Capitol historically has been an open place where visitors can come with little screening or notice. The new report found that funding for security is uneven and not always properly distributed. Frequent staff turnover has hindered efforts toward a more coordinated approach to security.

What should be done? The committee recommended that the governor designate a member of his Cabinet to oversee Capitol security. It said the state should extend State Patrol protection to more government officials, including Supreme Court justices,

constitutional officers and legislators. They, too, occasionally receive death threats and may need extra watching.

Some legislators who carry guns should be given extra training on gun safety, the report said, and the state should consider whether to begin screening for weapons in the Capitol.

Underground tunnels were highlighted as a security risk, particularly since they often cut off cell phone service.


The report recommended that a permanent committee continue to review security at the Capitol and that future funding be allocated to different areas based on risk.

"I thank the Committee on Capitol Complex Security for their important work to assure the safety of all Minnesotans who work at or visit our State Capitol," said Gov. Mark Dayton.

Rep. Rick Hansen, DFL-South St. Paul, said the report highlighted what Capitol workers have long known: "Building improvements are needed now and in the future."

Dayton said he would appoint his Public Safety commissioner, Mona Dohman, to

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A large advertisement banner for "License to Thrill" at Mystic Lake Casino. On the left, the words "LICENSE TO THRILL" are written in a stylized, metallic font. To the right, a box contains the text "MISSION EXTENDED". Below this, it says "DRAWINGS EVERY FRIDAY THROUGH APRIL 29" and "WIN A BMW Z4 THIS FRIDAY!". The Mystic Lake logo is on the right, with "CASINO - HOTEL" and "mysticlake.com" below it. At the bottom center, in small text, it says "Owned and Operated by the Shakopee Mdewaketon Sioux Community".

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