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SESSION WEEKLY

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On the cover: Members of the 2009-2010 Minnesota House of Representatives.

— Photo illustration by: Andrew VonBank

New jobs in hard times

Lawmakers make job creation a priority for 2009

By Nick Busse

When employees at St. Paul's Minnesota WorkForce Center are working harder than usual, that means a lot of people aren't working — and according to Site Manager Jim Schultz, the slumping economy is keeping them as busy as ever.

"In terms of people coming in, we see the gamut from entry-level people that lack their GED or high school diploma as well as highly educated people with masters and even a few doctorate degrees," Schultz said.

Schultz's facility is one of 47 workforce centers across the state established by the Department of Employment and Economic Development as a way to help bolster the state's labor market. The centers provide unemployed workers with free access to a variety of training opportunities and resources to help them find new jobs and

expand their career options.

With the current economic recession deepening, the centers have had their work cut out for them. At the St. Paul location alone, Schultz said the number of visits to his facility jumped from 29,000 in 2007 to 37,000 in 2008 — an increase of nearly 30 percent. Demands for their services are so high, Schultz said, that they've had to institute new policies such as time limits on use of job-search computers in their resource center.

In fact, they've even had to take the unusual step of hiring a security guard, because, as

Schultz put it, "To be honest ... not having a job is very stressful to people, and sometimes we found people engaging in bad behavior."

If the latest projected unemployment trends are any indication, the same story is playing out all over the state — and the situation is likely to get worse. Projections by DEED's Labor Market Information Office indicate that as many as 260,000 Minnesotans are likely to be jobless by the end of 2009 — an unemployment rate of 8.7 percent.

This means that in addition to the 39,000 workers who lost their jobs last year, another 61,000 could be out of work before the end of this year. The situation is so bad that DEED officials are warning that the state's unemployment insurance funds will be exhausted by Christmas, forcing the state to borrow from the federal government to cover workers' unemployment benefits.

Awaiting help

A few miles down the road from the workforce center, lawmakers at the State Capitol are at work on a new plan to stem the tide of job losses and provide some relief to the state's workforce.

HF1 and SF1, sponsored by House Majority Leader Tony Sertich (DFL-Chisholm) and Sen. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm), are intended to serve as the vehicle for Minnesota to accept its share of what could be a massive economic stimulus package from the federal government. There are no details on the package yet, or on how much Minnesota could receive, but President-elect Barack Obama has asked Congress for billions of dollars in funding for any number of infrastructure projects and other public works, with the goal of reinvigorating the economy and creating new jobs. Action is expected within the first few weeks of Obama's presidency.

At a Jan. 12 press conference, House and Senate DFL leaders explained that the purpose of the session's first bill is to signal the federal government that Minnesota is "ready, willing and able" to accept federal stimulus dollars.

"We feel it's important to introduce this bill to first and foremost say, 'Minnesota is ready to receive these funds, and we're going to be spending them in the most appropriate way possible with projects that are ready to go right away,'" Sertich said, adding that legislators



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Jim Schultz, site manager of the Minnesota WorkForce Center at Fairview and University avenues in St. Paul, said traffic at the office has increased nearly 30 percent in the past year.

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would seek to “maximize” the amount of federal resources provided to the state.

Sertich named a variety of different areas where he thought the funding might go, including transportation, health care, education and energy. He said House and Senate committees would likely hold hearings to ask state agencies what public works projects needed funding and how soon they could begin.

“We want to be going down a parallel track with them (the federal government) ... so when that bill is signed on President Obama’s desk, and those resources come to Minnesota, we have already been actively working to develop a plan to get those resources out the door to stimulate Minnesota’s economy,” Sertich said.

Lawmakers might find that some of the work has already been done.

One example is in the area of renewable energy, where the Green Jobs Task Force, an entity created by the Legislature in 2008, has been working to develop an action plan that could fit right into planning on how to use the stimulus money.

Rep. Jeremy Kalin (DFL-North Branch), co-chair of the task force, said renewable energy and energy conservation projects are particularly worthwhile for government to invest in because of their cost-efficiency. He gives the example of retrofitting public buildings to make them more energy efficient — something that costs money up front but saves taxpayer money in the long run.

“In fact, every day that we don’t get more folks to work doing so, we’re actually seeing more dollars go out the window and up the smokestack,” Kalin said. He added that green jobs are a “win-win-win” situation that provides employment, save taxpayer dollars and increase energy independence.

Few other options

The plan’s reliance on federal assistance makes some Republicans skeptical. The whole reason the federal government can provide any assistance at all is that it has the ability to run budget deficits — a luxury that Minnesota’s own constitution doesn’t allow. Not everyone thinks it’s a good idea.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty has said that the U.S. government is effectively bankrupt, and

Projected Job Growth/Losses in Minnesota

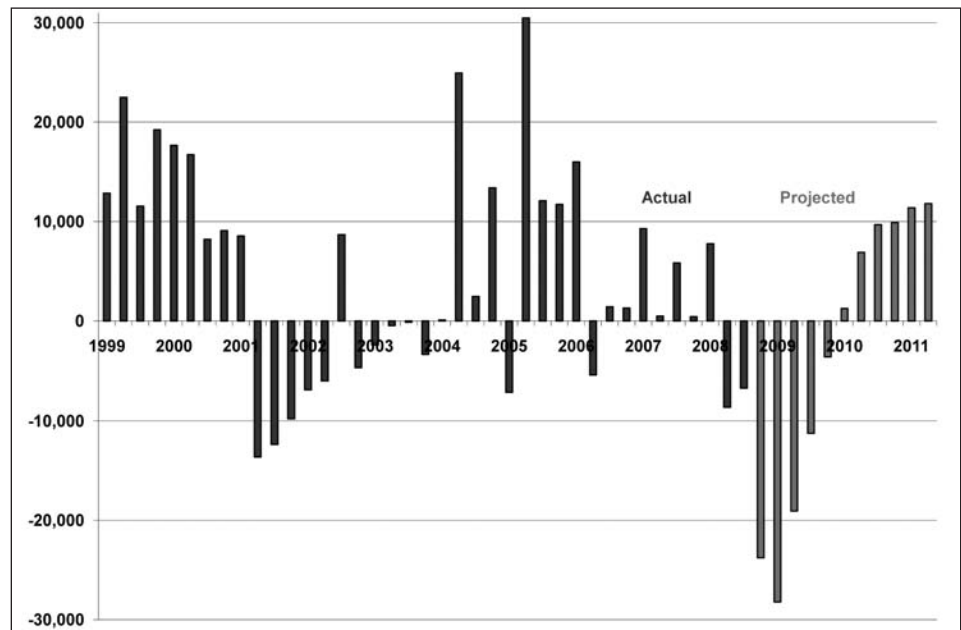


Chart courtesy: Labor Market Information Office,
Department of Employment and Economic Development


should avoid digging itself further into debt. Similarly, House Minority Leader Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) said in a press conference last week that as an “old-time Republican,” he is concerned about the federal deficit and the “spendaholics” in Congress. He said he would like to see any jobs stimulus plan focus on private sector-based solutions.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), a member of the Green Jobs Task Force, said that although he supports spending money on the green economy and job creation in general, he is concerned about the federal government’s poor track record on managing taxpayer money. He points to the \$700 billion

Troubled Assets Relief Program — better known as the Wall Street bailout — as a recent example.

“After they spent \$350 billion, they said, ‘Where’s the money? What is it doing?’ We have no knowledge if the people we gave it to are doing what we thought they would do,” Gunther said, adding that he sees no reason to believe that federal stimulus plans will be better managed in the future.

Gunther offered praise for the Dislocated Worker Program and other DEED job-training services, calling them “nation-leading,” and said legislators should take

care not to divert funding away from them. He noted a strong workforce — filled with workers paying income taxes — is the best way to avoid budget deficits like the one the state faces now. 

Tools for job-seekers

The Department of Employment and Economic Development provides a variety of programs and services to help people find jobs:

- Minnesota WorkForce Centers are free “one-stop shops” for job seekers, providing everything from workshops on resume-writing and interviewing to job fairs and access to computers;
- www.MinnesotaWorks.net is a free job-search Web site that allows job-seekers to post resumes and matches them with employers looking for workers;
- DEED’s Dislocated Worker Program helps employees who have been laid off return to the workforce as quickly as possible; and
- The Unemployment Insurance Program provides temporary assistance to workers who have lost employment through no fault of their own.

For more information on these and other programs and services, visit www.PositiveMinnesota.com or contact your local Minnesota WorkForce Center via 888-GET-JOBS 888-438-5627.

Editor's note: The following Highlights are coverage of select bills heard in House committees and other House activities held Jan. 8-15. Designations used in Highlight summaries: HF-House File; SF-Senate File; Ch-Chapter; and *- the bill version considered by the House or the bill language signed by the governor.

BONDING

Better luck with bond sales

With an economic outlook that has legislators picking their brains for solutions, a slight silver lining appeared when the state had better luck selling bonds than it did last year.

The Minnesota Management and Budget Office sold \$400 million worth of bonds in three competitive sales Jan. 13. The bond sale raises money for capital projects, including college classrooms, prisons and road projects.

Kathy Kardell, assistant commissioner with the office's Treasury Division, told the House Capital Investment Finance Division Jan. 13 the sale would have normally occurred in October, but was deferred until now because of poor market conditions. The state received an interest rate of 3.5 percent, which would have been 5 percent in October.

With concerns over the recent closures of some high-profile banks, like Lehman Brothers, Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) asked, "What happens if one of these companies goes down?"

Kardell said she doesn't think there's any risk. Using Lehman Brothers as an example, she said the bonds they had were sold immediately to other investors. Merrill Lynch bought \$325 million worth of the bonds sold this week.

— S. HEGMAN

CRIME

Prison population projections

More Minnesotans are expected to live behind bars in the next decade, but the rate of the population increase is expected to slow.

Speaking before the House Public Safety Policy and Oversight Committee Jan. 13, Grant Duwe said the projected offender increase is expected to be 2,064 prisoners between July 1, 2008, and July 1, 2018. Duwe, the Corrections Department research and evaluation manager, said the prisoner increase

in the previous eight years was 2,948.

That would put the state's prison population at 11,288 on July 1, 2018, compared to 9,224 on July 1, 2008. Eight years earlier the number was 6,276.

"This is based on current trends, laws and practices," he said. "Annual forecasts over the past three years have been very accurate as the average monthly error rate has been 0.4 percent."

He said part of the rapid increase earlier this decade, and slower projected growth is related to methamphetamine convictions, which are on the decline.

There were less than "a few hundred" meth offenders in state prison at the start of this decade, he said. In 2006, there were 1,138 prisoners, but about 200 less since then.

Drug offenders are expected to account for much of the short-term growth, but about one-third of the long-term growth. Sex and other person offenders are expected to account for almost half of the growth in the next decade.

Rep. Paul Kohls (R-Victoria) wondered if there is enough room to house more prisoners.

"We do not anticipate bonding for additional male beds until the bonding session of 2014, and we do not anticipate bonding for additional female beds until well past the end of this chart," said David Crist, assistant commissioner for the department's Facility Services Division. The chart went until 2018.

— M. COOK

EDUCATION

Reviewing the syllabus

The House K-12 Education Policy and Oversight Committee began laying out specific topics for this session at its first meeting on Jan. 13.

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul), the committee chairman, said issues they'll wrestle with throughout the session include oversight and quality of charter schools; the achievement gap between different races; the "accountability framework," including the role of high-stakes testing such as the Graduation Required Assessments for Diploma math test for 11th graders; and teacher professional development.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), who leads the Charter Schools Working Group, said that although some charters have failed, the charter school model is valuable as "a

In memoriam

House members who passed away last year were remembered during the Jan. 12 floor session. They are:

- **Maurice "Mac" McCollar** - 1975-78, District 49B;
- **Otto Bang** - 1963-66, District 33; 1967-72, District 29A; and Senate District 39, 1973-82;
- **John Brandl** - 1977-78, District 61A; 1981-82, District 61A; 1983-86, District 62B; and Senate District 62, 1987-90;
- **Maxine Penas** - 2001-2006, District 1A;
- **Stanley J. Fudro** - 1957-62, District 28; 1963-72, District 40; 1973-80, District 55A;
- **Robert F. Christensen** - 1963-66, District 44; 1967-70, District 48B; and
- **Irv Anderson** - 1965-66, District 64; 1967-72, District 64B; 1973-82, District 3A; 1991-2006, District 3A.

— L. SCHUTZ

laboratory as opposed to a direct competitor" of the mainstream school.

An Office of the Legislative Auditor June 2008 evaluation pinpoints charter schools' problems with oversight and governance. These include inconsistent standards and lack of financial training for charter sponsors, conflicts of interest such as the requirement that charters have teacher-majority boards and lease aid. Mariani said an upcoming bill would likely incorporate the auditor's recommendations.

Assessing student achievement remains problematic. A huge issue concerning school districts statewide is whether most juniors will pass the math portion of the GRAD test. A passing score is required to graduate.

The test is aligned to the 2003 Department of Education math standards, but only 34 percent of 11th graders passed a similar test last year. Rep. Denise Dittrich (DFL-Champlin) said that a workable solution could be for Education Commissioner Alice Seagren to determine a score for "partially meets proficiency" standards. The Legislature could also pass a law requiring students who do not at least partially meet proficiency to do remedial work and retest, but allow them to graduate if they meet all other local and state graduation requirements.

"Districts are very anxious to have some sort of resolution as to how we are going to proceed with this high-stakes test," Dittrich said.

— K. BERGGREN

EMPLOYMENT

Extending unemployed benefits

Approximately 3,000 of the state's unemployed could soon be eligible for an extension of their unemployment benefits.

Sponsored by Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul), HF4 would change the way the state computes the unemployment compensation eligibility period.

The bill is being fast-tracked to the House floor.

In less than an hour on Jan. 13, the bill was approved by the House Labor and Consumer Protection Division and the House Commerce and Labor Committee. On Jan. 15, it was approved by the House Bioscience and Workforce Development Policy and Oversight Division and the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance and Policy Division. It awaits action by the House Finance Committee.

The bill's companion, SF4, sponsored by Senate President James Metzen (DFL-South St. Paul), was passed 65-0 on Jan. 15.

Lee Nelson, chief attorney for the Department of Employment and Economic Development, said the method the state uses to compute eligibility has made about 10 percent of those who could qualify for the federal extension enacted in July ineligible for the benefit.

"The people have worked long enough to qualify, but the dates by which the state uses are a problem for qualification," he said.

With unemployment in the state expected to rise in the coming months, the department has calculated that an additional 150 Minnesotans would qualify for the extension each week.

— L. SCHUTZ

More job losses predicted

Minnesota will likely shed an additional 61,000 jobs by the end of this year, and might not see any employment gains until early 2010, a state official said.

Steve Hine, labor market information director at the Department of Employment and Economic Development, made this grim prediction Jan. 13 to members of the House Bioscience and Workforce Development Policy and Oversight Division. No action was taken.

Hine said the projected net loss for this year would come on top of the approximately 39,000 jobs lost last year.

The projections are based on national economic trends predicted by Global Insight, a widely cited economic forecasting company, he said. Global Insight predicts an economic rebound in early 2010 — although, as Hine

UNEMPLOYMENT FACTS

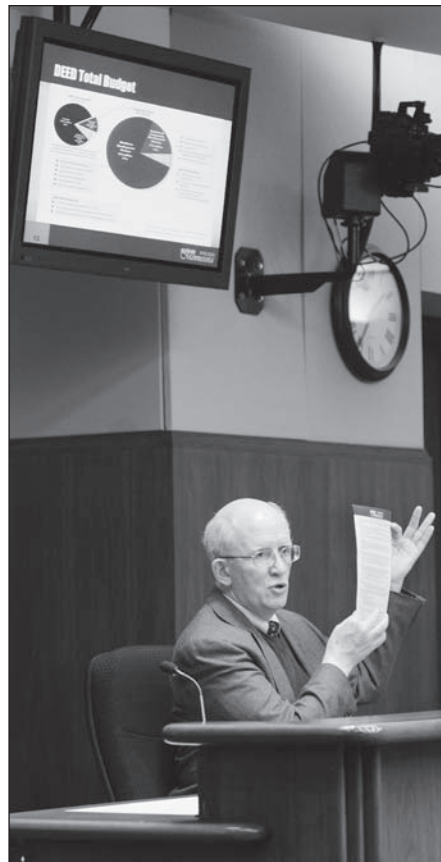


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Dan McElroy, commissioner of the Department of Employment and Economic Development, holds up a copy of Facts about Unemployment Insurance in Minnesota for members of the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance and Policy Division at a Jan. 13 hearing.

noted, it took Minnesota more than four years to regain the number of jobs it lost during the last recession, in 2001.

Among the other bad news, Hine said the state is likely to reach all-time highs in its total number of unemployed workers — as many as 260,000 by the end of 2009 — as well as the number of workers claiming and receiving unemployment benefits.

As if all that weren't bad enough, he said Minnesota's employment rate has also been lagging behind the national average in recent years.

"There's a lot of speculation as to whether we've lost our luster here," Hine said, noting that the state's labor market, prior to 2006, had historically performed as good as or better than the United States as a whole.

Hine said the downturn in the housing market likely plays a role in Minnesota's below-average employment rates. In particular, the state's forest products manufacturing industry has been negatively impacted.

Division Chairman Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) said members of the division have their work cut out for them.

"We're not growing the way we need to grow to keep the state healthy," he said.

Division members also learned that the state faces the long-term challenges of an aging workforce, possible labor shortages and — despite an influx of immigrants — much slower growth in the state's labor force.

Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud), the division's lead Republican, said the projected long-term trends are particularly troubling. "If these numbers are reflective of what's going to happen even with the immigration we're expecting, we're in a world of hurt."

— N. BUSSE

HOUSING

Focus on foreclosures

In an era of banking and automotive industry federal bailouts, House Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division members heard about ways that federal and state funds are being distributed to Minnesotans whose homes are at risk of foreclosure.

Tonja Orr, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency assistant commissioner, said the agency has seen a 35 percent increase in foreclosures between 2007 and 2008. That's 28,000 more families displaced. Orr also said that homeowners and renters are waiting until they are delinquent 120 days or more before seeking help, and that more emphasis is being placed on getting people help before the sheriff comes knocking at the door.

There are several ways the agency is attempting to expedite needed counseling and financial assistance:

- educational housing fairs, conference calls for people who cannot apply in person or who wish to be discreet, flyers in city utility bills and multi-lingual counseling;
- \$9 million is available for help with down payments; and
- \$1 million is available for a combined rehabilitation and down payment loan program.

Rep. Dan Severson (R-Sauk Rapids) said the process, as a whole, may create a false sense of security. Communities were encouraged to provide subsidized housing and people were "pushed" into those homes, Severson said. With a downturn in the economy, their ability to make mortgage payments diminished.

"So you have the taxpayer paying on the front end to get people into subsidized housing. When it comes off the market, now you're asking for more money to fix up the

MEET AND GREET

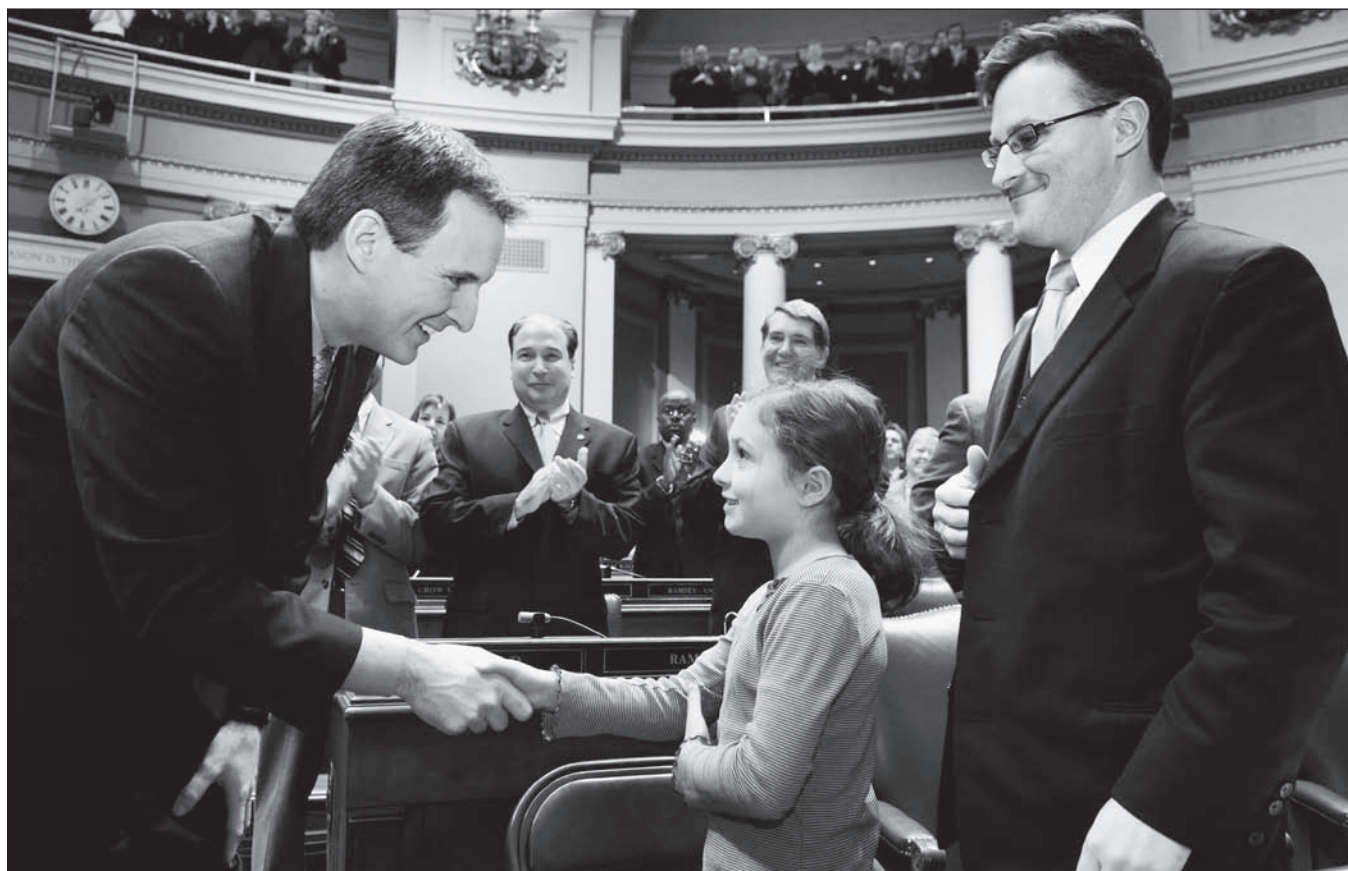


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Eight-year-old Alice Lesch, center, daughter of Rep. John Lesch, right, is greeted by Gov. Tim Pawlenty, left, as he entered the House Chamber Jan. 15 to give his State of the State address to a joint session of the House and Senate.

house so we can present it to new people who, in fact, may be questionable as to whether they can meet the challenge," he said.

What the committee needs to address, according to Severson, is how to create a system that creates a long-term solution.

Committee Chairwoman Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) advised members that a Housing Caucus, which includes bipartisan participants from both the House and the Senate, is expected to reconvene this session, although an initial meeting date has not yet been scheduled.

— S. HEGARTY

HUMAN SERVICES

Vets Home problems surface in audit

Inadequate financial controls at the Minnesota Veterans Home - Minneapolis resulted in accounting inadequacies over resident trust accounts and payroll and administrative expenditures.

These were among the 18 findings of a July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2007, audit

of the home, conducted by the Office of the Legislative Auditor and released Nov. 26, 2008. It was discussed during the House Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Finance Division meeting Jan. 13.

"This is a very serious report and one we will watch over carefully as the oversight committee," said Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar), chairman of the division.

The home came under intense scrutiny after reports of inadequate patient care and facility and management concerns began to surface in 2002. The home's oversight body, the Veterans Home Board, was dissolved in 2007 upon recommendation from the governor-appointed long-term care commission. Oversight was then moved to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Commissioner Clark Dyrud tried to assure division members that care for the more than 300 patients is not being compromised, and that this report is not a reflection of the management of the state's four other veterans homes.

While many of the problems precede his oversight, Dyrud said he requested the audit as a baseline, but was surprised by the "depth

of the problem." He said that many of the findings are being addressed.

Among the findings, the audit states the home did not fulfill its management responsibilities to control its financial activities and ensure that transactions complied with state requirements and internal policies.

Further, it did not adequately restrict employee access to accounting systems or manage employee overtime costs. Nor did the home's pharmacy adequately manage its non-controlled prescription drugs and other supplies.

While several division members requested another audit in the near-term, auditors said they would need at least a year or more of data to draw conclusions. It was suggested that Dyrud provide the division with quarterly updates.

— L. SCHUTZ

Short-term coverage for unemployed

Increasing unemployment numbers are translating to more people losing their health care coverage.

Rep. Paul Thissen (DFL-Mpls) sponsors

HF42 that would provide immediate short-term health insurance coverage for some qualified unemployed people.

"My goal here is to have a real discussion and come up with a solution to give Minnesota families relief in an easy and unbureaucratic way," he told the House Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight Committee, which he chairs, on Jan. 13.

The bill would provide qualifying individuals receiving unemployment benefits, and their family members, up to six months of MinnesotaCare coverage, while exempting them from premiums and eligibility requirements. There is no Senate companion.

Those who become unemployed in many cases are eligible for COBRA health insurance, but Thissen said that the cost sometimes eats about 70 percent of the person's unemployment benefit, making the insurance unaffordable.

Because Thissen recognized the bill as a "work in progress" needing further discussion, the committee laid the bill over.

Rep. Tom Emmer (R-Delano) praised the idea behind the bill, but is hopeful that a private health care option, such as a voucher or subsidy, can be found rather than moving people onto a government program.

Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud) noted the unpredictability of the length of time a person may be unemployed "It would be nice to preserve private options for them rather than put them into another government program that ends up cost-shifting the costs to the private sector."

— L. SCHUTZ

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government fraud rises

State Auditor Rebecca Otto said her office saw an uptick in financial fraud cases involving local government officials last year and warned that the economic downturn might spur even more cases.

Otto told members of the House State Government Finance Division on Jan. 13 that 64 cases of suspected misuse of taxpayer funds were reported to her office last year — up from 39 in 2007.

"There was approximately a 64 percent increase in the number of reports," Otto said, but tempered that statistic by noting that it accounted for only a small fraction of the state's approximately 4,300 units of local government.

"That's the good news — there is a lot of good work going on in local governments around the state. But there are still some problems," she said.

Otto said the state's slumping economy will

put additional pressures on local government employees' personal finances that might serve as a temptation to commit fraud. She said gambling addictions and gambling debts among local officials are often a factor in such cases, as are health care expenses or the loss of a spouse's job.

Nancy Bode, assistant legal counsel for the office, presented division members with several case studies.

She described how the Koochiching Economic Development Authority — a two-person agency — put one employee in charge of its entire financial operation, allowing her to write more than \$334,000 in unauthorized checks to herself over a period of five years without anyone noticing.

In another example, Bode said a bookkeeper for a school district in northwest Minnesota managed to steal nearly \$119,000 in public funds by taking cash out of deposits and replacing the money with checks for which there were no receipts — a scheme known as "lapping."

Otto said that in most cases, the fraud or abuse occurred because of easily solvable problems, such as local governments putting too much control in the hands of one person rather than dividing important job duties. She said local governments need to implement strong internal controls that deny employees the opportunity to commit fraud, and that also prevent local governments from falling victim to financial scams from outside the organization.

— N. BUSSE

TAXES

Extra sales tax spending plans

Preserving the state's cultural and outdoor heritage meant enough to a majority of state voters that they voted for a change in the state's constitution.

"We have to determine the legislation that will make that work," said Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), chairwoman of the House Cultural and Outdoor Resources Finance Division. "This is a big, big responsibility and none of it is just automatic. We are in charge of listening and finding out what the people were saying when they voted 'yes' and what their expectations are."

The constitutional amendment, which garnered 56 percent of the vote in November, will go into effect July 1, 2009, and increase the state's sales tax from 6.5 percent to 6.875 percent. The extra money collected will be divided with 33 percent allocated to the Outdoor Heritage Fund, and to the three newly created funds the allocations are as

follows:

- 33 percent to the Clean Water Fund, with at least 5 percent for clean drinking water;
- 19.75 percent to the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund; and
- 14.25 percent to the Parks and Trails Fund.

Representatives from several arts, outdoors and cultural groups pleaded their cases for funding consideration during the division's first meeting Jan. 12. These included the Science Museum of Minnesota, the Minnesota Children's Museum and the Minnesota Farmers Union.

Murphy said the division will get a lot of background on issues and as much scientific data as possible to make informed decisions on how to make the amendment work over the next 25 years. The extra sales tax is in effect until 2034.

"This is our kids' money. This is our grandkids' money," Murphy said. "That is our legacy."

Murphy also said she chose to have the division's meeting as the last one on Mondays so no one would be in a rush to leave for other meetings.

"That means we can be here from 4:30 to 8:30 or 4:30 to 10:30," she said.

One committee member asked if she would pay for pizza for any late meetings.

In response she said, "You might want to pack a sandwich."

— S. HEGMAN

SOLDIER RECOGNIZED



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg, a member of the Minnesota National Guard Red Bulls, is recognized during the Jan. 15 State of the State address.

The state of our state

Tax cuts, wage freezes on governor's list to help budget

By SONJA HEGMAN

With a nearly \$5 billion projected deficit facing the state, Gov. Tim Pawlenty urged bipartisan teamwork and proposed tax cuts and credits to businesses to stimulate job creation in the state's lackluster economy.

"We face brand new challenges in a rapidly changing world," Pawlenty said in his State of the State address Jan. 15. "The old ways aren't going to cut it anymore."

As a way to "jump start" job creation, the governor outlined his proposed Minnesota Jobs Recovery Act that would:

- cut the state's business tax rate in half, from 9.8 percent to 4.8 percent, over the next six years;
- provide a \$50 million package of tax credits that would create more than \$100 million in new investments;
- provide a 25 percent refundable tax credit for small business owners who reinvest in their business quickly to stimulate the economy;
- provide a capital gains exemption for qualifying investments in small businesses; and
- provide businesses with a 100 percent exemption from the sales tax immediately upon the purchase of equipment, instead of filing paperwork for a refund.

"These tax cuts and incentives may seem aggressive in the context of our budget challenges," Pawlenty said. "But we simply have to take dramatic measures to improve our job climate and kick-start job growth in Minnesota."

With an image of a mom and dad sitting at their kitchen table fretting over "a budget that's tighter than it's ever been," Pawlenty asked legislators to bring the same emotions and concerns faced by everyday Minnesotans to the Capitol. "We need to start by taking the kitchen table approach and setting priorities."

Among other things, the governor wants

to change the way government does business so it is not "to the detriment of taxpayers." For example, he said the state's 87 counties duplicate services 87 times.

"I'm not proposing to eliminate counties," he said. "But I am proposing that we save money by encouraging counties to work together."

He also suggests that counties be given incentives to create no more than 15 new regional enterprises that "will manage and run all human service programs so each county doesn't have to run their own."

Pawlenty said an ongoing top state priority must be to "dramatically reform and improve our K-12 education system." He vowed his biennial budget, to be released

Jan. 27, would contain ways to do that.

In addition to having minimum entrance requirements for teacher preparation programs and modernizing the way teachers are paid, Pawlenty suggests paying school districts based on results.

"I propose we increase school district funding by up to an additional 2 percent per student for students meeting standards or at least showing reasonable growth towards achievement," he said. "This will align the money we spend with the results we expect. It's common sense."

Pawlenty said the state must get health and human services costs under control;

otherwise, the ability to fund other priority areas could be eliminated. The budget forecast shows these programs will rise nearly 19 percent if left unchecked.

"As my budget will reflect, there is no easy way to do this. But, in the midst of these changes, we will protect all current health care eligibility for children," he said.

Other items proposed by the governor include:

- creating tax-free Green Job Opportunity Building Zones (JOBZ) for renewable energy jobs created anywhere in the state;
- requiring the Minnesota State College and Universities system to deliver 25 percent of credits online by 2015;
- imposing a firm cap on tuition increases; and
- instituting a two-year wage freeze for state government employees and entities that accept state money.

"The state of our state is challenged, but overcoming challenges is what Minnesota does best," he said.

Some DFLers, including House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls), were

left wondering about Pawlenty's logic behind increased spending. She said his proposals would push the state's projected budget deficit north of \$6 billion.


"When we were looking to the governor to make concrete solutions as to how we're going to solve this very massive problem together, the governor's

"When we were looking to the governor to make concrete solutions as to how we're going to solve this very massive problem together, the governor's answer will actually make the problem worse for Minnesotans."

— Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher
Speaker of the House

answer will actually make the problem worse for Minnesotans," Kelliher said. "Let's be clear, some Minnesotans are going to pay for that spending. ... It's those exact same families around the kitchen table who end up paying for the governor's spending."

She also wondered why the address did not reference a potential federal stimulus package, something the DFL is anticipating.

In contrast, House Minority Leader Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) said, "It's a little bit like waiting for the Publisher's Clearing House guy to show up at your door." 

STAFF WRITERS SUSAN HEGARTY AND MIKE COOK
CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

Not enough money in the cookie jar

Spending to outpace revenues as state's population ages, report finds

By SONJA HEGMAN

Baby boomers are expected to suck the state dry if current budget problems prevail, because more money will be spent for their health care—and living on fixed incomes, they will no longer provide the tax revenues they once did.

The State Budget Trends Study Commission presented this and other findings to a joint meeting of the House Taxes and Finance committees Jan. 13.

Health care is growing at a rate of 8.5 percent per year. State revenues are expected to grow at an annual rate of 3.9 percent over the next 25 years.

"Nothing in this report is going to solve

the current problem," said Jay Kiedrowski, commission co-chair. "We're going to be facing this three or four years from now unless we plant corn seeds today."

From 2005 to 2015, the state's fastest growing population is those ages 55 to 69. Next to health care, education is the second highest cost to the state moving forward.

"If we had a balanced budget this biennium, we still have expenditures exceeding revenue, so we would have a problem in the next biennium as well," said former Human Services Commissioner Kevin Goodno, also a commission co-chair.

But nothing will stop the fact that people are living longer and will be more of a burden on the state's health care system, he said. Starting at age 65, all residents are eligible for Medicare whether they are working or not, said Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth).

"What do you do about health care costs?" Goodno asked. "One of the biggest challenges is restrictions from the federal government. We know there are better solutions than this. We'd welcome any solutions you'd like to recommend."

The 15-member commission was established in the 2007 omnibus state government finance law and held 14 meetings beginning in the fall of 2007. "When I introduced this bill (to form

the commission), there was no deficit," said Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington), chairwoman of the House Taxes Committee. "They came together to give us information for the long-term."

Financial recommendations were reviewed from various studies completed over a 30-year period, and the commission heard presentations from many state officials with backgrounds in demography, education, health care, finance and economics.

Findings of the commission include:

- Minnesota has become more diverse in recent years and this will continue as economic growth depends on drawing new workers to the state;
- public spending priorities will need to shift as the state's economically dependent

population grows larger and relies more heavily on fewer workers;

- Minnesota has a long-term structural budget problem, with long-term expenditure growth likely to outpace revenue growth;

- Minnesota's statutory budget reserve ceiling has not grown to an appropriate level to adequately manage the underlying risks to the state's tax system over

"The reality is that these recommendations don't mean anything unless you follow through. You have the ability to change those statutes. It's up to you to decide if there's a will to do that."

— Kevin Goodno
State Budget Trends
Study Commission co-chair

time; and

- Minnesota needs a cash flow reserve account of sufficient size so the state can avoid short-term external borrowing during a biennium.

House Finance Committee Chairman Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) said there's been a debate on how to deal with the state's reserve fund over the years. "What should be counted as a reserve from our perspective?"

Goodno said the commission didn't get into that level of detail, but "you want to make

Budget trends continued on page 23



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Kevin Goodno, left, follows along as Jay Kiedrowski explains a portion of the State Budget Trends Study Commission report to members of the House Taxes and Finance committees Jan. 13.

Financial responsibility concerns

Legislative audits show need for accounting changes in some areas

By MIKE COOK

In a financial crisis, every dollar and every cent can be important. That's why the work of the nonpartisan Office of the Legislative Auditor is so important — be the news good or bad.

The office's Financial Audit Division issued 36 state agency, board or department audits in 2008. Among the common findings were a few problem areas of basic controls, including:

- incompatible duties;
- safeguarding receipts;
- insufficient documentation;
- poor monitoring of employees' use of a state-issued cell phone;
- reimbursing travel expenses for ineligible meals or things that lacked sufficient support; and
- lack of monitoring when exceptions to normal timesheet recording occurred.

"What we're trying to do is not just disclose problems, not just have findings, but we're trying to work our way toward good government that has a reputation for very strong integrity and good financial management," Legislative Auditor Jim Nobles told the House Finance Committee Jan. 12. "I think we've hit a lapse in that, that we have an opportunity to now correct, and we ought to correct very quickly."

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal), the committee chairman, said individual audits are likely to get a closer look by the appropriate House committees.

Cecile Ferkul, deputy legislative auditor with the audit division, said incompatible duties include ensuring one person doesn't handle a financial transaction from beginning to end. She said this has to do with the amount of access one person may have to an accounting system.

"It also creates an environment where fraud could occur. ... You'd want to separate as a way to ensure errors are detected and that the opportunity for fraud is diminished."

Ferkul noted the Board of Barber and Cosmetologist Examiners had poor separation of duties for custody of cash and could not account for about \$10,000 when comparing revenues to licenses issued. "It is likely it was a fraud on the part of one of their employees," she said.

Any misuse of state funds must be reported to the Office of the Attorney General, which can then try to recover funds informally or by legal action. County attorneys are responsible for criminal prosecution, which the office encourages when appropriate.

"Being able to provide evidence for the state's financial activity, we feel, is a very important responsibility of state government."

— Cecile Ferkul,
deputy legislative auditor

A concern was raised as to how the Combative Sports Commission collected license or event fees at a fight. "They told us it goes in someone's pocket and gets brought to the office on Monday," Ferkul said. "That's not the way a state agency should be run, whether it's two people or 100 people or 5,000 people."

During the post-Interstate 35W bridge collapse investigation into the activities of Sonia Pitt, the former director of the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management at the Department of Transportation, it was discovered that more than 65 percent of the calls on her state-issued

cell phone from February through December 2007 were personal. Yet, she is likely not the only state employee who has abused their device.

Federal law says personal use is a benefit to a state employee and should be taxed. "We found pretty much across-the-board that no state agency is monitoring cell phone use in accordance with the IRS regulations," Ferkul said, noting the IRS has increased enforcement. She said the University of California-Los Angeles was fined \$250,000 for non-compliance.

As for travel, the lack of oversight allowed an inspector with the Department of Labor and Industry to make an extra \$10,000 by routinely overstating his mileage claims.

In about one-third of the audits, needed documentation was missing, including one agency that had no record for about \$70,000 worth of purchase card transactions done by their employees. "Being able to provide evidence for the state's financial activity, we feel, is a very important responsibility of state government," Ferkul said.

Reaction

Because of time constraints and resources, it can sometimes take years for an auditor to follow up with an agency to see if improvements were made. Nobles would like to see Minnesota Management and Budget emphasize these findings as preventative measures.

"We don't want an agency to say, 'That was a problem with Bill, and we talked to Bill about it and he doesn't do that anymore,'" Nobles said. "We see sometimes these problems as indicative of broader problems that need to be addressed."

Deputy Commissioner Stephanie Andrews vowed that Minnesota Management and Budget, formerly the Department of Finance, will continue working with agencies, although it might change how it trains agency employees.

Audit Reports continued on page 23

Passing the torch of democracy

Youth immerse themselves in lingo and actions of lawmaking

By KRIS BERGGREN

Jeff Boigenzahn II has served as a Senate committee chair, House chaplain and now a lobbyist.

Clad in a dark suit and necktie, sporting Capitol credentials around his neck, he waited outside a State Office Building hearing room Jan. 9 to testify before the Forest, Wetland and Wildlife Committee.

Inside the room, Sen. Fadumo Mohamud, in a pink hijab and wearing large hoop earrings, read her bill, HF6210, which would reduce light pollution by limiting rooftop lighting in urban areas. After testimony from lobbyists and questions from members, the committee chair called the vote. Mohamud's bill was approved.

Those names don't ring a bell? That's because Boigenzahn, a senior at Red Wing High School, and Mohamud, a student at Lincoln International High School in Minneapolis, are two of the students who took part in the YMCA's annual Youth in Government Model Assembly. As the House recessed Jan. 8-11 expressly for the purpose, 1,400 students representing high schools and YMCA branches around the state gathered at the Capitol Complex to try on the roles of the real Legislature.

The first model legislature was organized by a New York state YMCA in 1936. Minnesota's program began a decade later. Its motto: "Democracy must be learned by each generation."

The career of "proud alum" Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) could be an indication Youth in Government is indeed helping to pass the torch of democracy. Simon's nameplate is now affixed to Desk 103 in the House Chamber, but he easily recalls the thrill of sitting at a similar desk for the first time as a teenager.

"That opportunity to be here and immerse yourself for a few days in the physical trappings of state government was exciting," Simon said. The program's high standards, including the chance to meet legislators, a formal dress code and the etiquette of parliamentary



PHOTO BY NICKI GORDON

Nima Hassan, a junior at Fridley High School, proposes a new bill Jan. 9 during the YMCA's Youth in Government Model Assembly.

procedure helped him and his peers "get into character" and "made the possibility real to me of someday being in public office."

The assembly is nonpartisan, though participants say their peers from all parts of the state bring a diversity of opinion. Students follow official legislative process to the letter and take pride in running their own show. Some veterans in their fourth or fifth year find it difficult to shake off the legislative lingo after they return to real life.

"You get up in class and say, 'I yield my time,'" said Kayden Wittman of Willmar, acting the role of the governor's press secretary.

Gov. Logan Dick, a Hopkins High School senior with the Ridgedale YMCA delegation, said Model Assembly bills often reflect issues in the news. She and Lt Gov. Jacob Peters campaigned last year on a platform that sounds a bit like a physics formula, $E^2 + T^2$, which stands for "Energy, Education, Technology, Transportation." Last year, she said students introduced a number of bills

about bridges and safety regulations. This year's slate included energy and economic bailout concerns.

Many students are clearly riding a wave of optimism created by the campaign of President-elect Barack Obama. Boigenzahn and his colleagues, Henry Sibley High School juniors Matt Zekowski and Adiv Paradise, chatted about their political inspirations.

"Barack Obama to me is the American dream," Boigenzahn said. "Often we ask ourselves what is the American dream: To rise from nothing to everything."

"To serve the people," interjected Paradise.

"He wasn't even elected yet and he was already bringing people together," Boigenzahn continued.

Students mostly downplayed any political ambitions, though many intend to study

Youth in Government continued on page 23

Committee Information

2009 Minnesota House of Representatives

Member Assignments as of 1/14/09

Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs

445 State Office Building296-3201
Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:45 p.m.
in Room 5*

Members: 11

Chair: Otremba-DFL

Vice Chair: Doty-DFL

Republican Lead: Hamilton-R

Drazkowski-R	Morrow-DFL
Eken-DFL	Olin-DFL
Faust-DFL	Shimanski-R
Kath-DFL	Urdahl-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Andrew "AJ" Duerr.....296-9468

Committee Legislative Assistant

Mary Larson296-5486

Veterans Affairs Division

439 State Office Building296-4346
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in the Basement
Hearing Room*

Members: 10

Chair: Koenen-DFL

Vice Chair: Newton-DFL

Republican Lead: Dettmer-R

Doty-DFL	Otremba-DFL
Faust-DFL	Sanders-R
Lieder-DFL	Severson-R
Magnus-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christine Murphy296-5491

Committee Legislative Assistant

Mary Larson296-5486

Civil Justice

367 State Office Building296-4262
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and Wednesdays
at 8:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 14

Chair: Mullery-DFL

Vice Chair: Jackson-DFL

Republican Lead: Drazkowski-R

Champion-DFL	Mahoney-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL	Olin-DFL
Holberg-R	Paymar-DFL
Hortman-DFL	Scott-R
Johnson-DFL	Westrom-R
Kelly-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Patrick Baldwin296-4283

Committee Legislative Assistant

Vickie Benson.....296-5526

Commerce and Labor

503 State Office Building296-4192
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.
in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 18

Chair: Atkins-DFL

Vice Chair: Lillie-DFL

Republican Lead: Zellers-R

Anderson, S.-R	Knuth-DFL
Anzelc-DFL	Mullery-DFL
Dauids-R	Murdock-R
Davnie-DFL	Sanders-R
Fritz-DFL	Simon-DFL
Hoppe-R	Slocum-DFL
Hosch-DFL	Thao-DFL
Johnson-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

John Reich296-7175

Committee Legislative Assistant

Christopher Kwapick296-6586

Labor and

Consumer Protection Division

545 State Office Building296-0173
Meets: Fridays at 10:30 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 11

Chair: Davnie-DFL

Vice Chair: Fritz-DFL

Republican Lead: Murdock-R

Lillie-DFL	Simon-DFL
Mack-R	Solberg-DFL
Mahoney-DFL	Zellers-R
Nelson-DFL	Atkins-DFL
Sanders-R	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christine Murphy296-5491

Committee Legislative Assistant

Mary Faust.....296-4321

Telecommunications Regulation and Infrastructure Division

549 State Office Building296-4201
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 11

Chair: Johnson-DFL

Vice Chair: Masin-DFL

Republican Lead: Hoppe-R

Beard-R	Kiffmeyer-R
Brown-DFL	Lillie-DFL
Doepke-R	Sailer-DFL
Gardner-DFL	Atkins-DFL
Juhnke-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

John Reich296-7175

Committee Legislative Assistant

Mary Faust.....296-4321

This list is subject to change.

**Non-voting member

Member Assignments as of 1/14/09

*Rooms in State Office Building

All area codes are 651

Environment Policy and Oversight

575 State Office Building296-9918
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 18

Chair: Eken-DFL

Vice Chair: Gardner-DFL

Republican Lead: McNamara-R

Anderson, P.-R	Loon-R
Cornish-R	Paymar-DFL
Dill-DFL	Persell-DFL
Drazkowski-R	Sailer-DFL
Falk-DFL	Sterner-DFL
Hackbarth-R	Thissen-DFL
Hansen-DFL	Wagenius-DFL
Juhnke-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Kirk Koudelka296-6937

Committee Legislative Assistant

Diogo Reis296-3889

Game, Fish and Forestry Division

571 State Office Building296-2190
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 11

Chair: Dill-DFL

Vice Chair: Sailer-DFL

Republican Lead: Cornish-R

Falk-DFL	Murdock-R
Hackbarth-R	Persell-DFL
Hansen-DFL	Thao-DFL
McNamara-R	Thissen-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Kirk Koudelka296-6937

Committee Legislative Assistant

Diogo Reis296-3889

Ethics

343 State Office Building296-2676
Meets: At the call of the chair in (No Room Assigned)*

Members: 4

Chair: Murphy, M.-DFL

Vice Chair: Smith-R

Holberg-R	(A)Liebling-DFL
Simon-DFL	(A)Shimanski-R
	(A)-Alternate

Staff

Committee Legislative Assistant

Phil Chen296-5360

Finance

479 State Office Building296-4255
Meets: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. or call of the chair in Room 200*

Members: 33

Chair: Carlson-DFL

Vice Chair: Benson-DFL

Republican Lead: Buesgens-R

Brod-R	Lenczewski-DFL
Champion-DFL	Murphy, M.-DFL
Clark-DFL	Paymar-DFL
Emmer-R	Pelowski-DFL
Garofalo-R	Peppin-R
Greiling-DFL	Rukavina-DFL
Hackbarth-R	Shimanski-R
Hausman-DFL	Simon-DFL
Hilty-DFL	Slawik-DFL
Howes-R	Smith-R
Huntley-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Juhnke-DFL	Thissen-DFL
Kahn-DFL	Wagenius-DFL
Kiffmeyer-R	Winkler-DFL
Knuth-DFL	Seifert-R
Kohls-R	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Joanna Dornfeld.....296-9302

Committee Legislative Assistant

Lill Pohlkamp296-9552

Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Finance Division

485 State Office Building296-6206
Meets: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 14

Chair: Juhnke-DFL

Vice Chair: Hamilton-R

Republican Lead: Magnus-R

Anderson, P.-R	Shimanski-R
Brown-DFL	Torkelson-R
Doty-DFL	Wolti-DFL
Eken-DFL	Carlson-DFL
Falk-DFL	ex-officio**
Faust-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Hosch-DFL	ex-officio**
Otremba-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Andrew "AJ" Duerr.....296-9468

Committee Legislative Assistant

Will Hailer296-5992

Capital Investment Finance Division

453 State Office Building296-3824
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 22

Chair: Hausman-DFL

Vice Chair: Scalze-DFL

Republican Lead: Howes-R

Anderson, B.-R	Mahoney-DFL
Carlson-DFL	Mullery-DFL
Clark-DFL	Murphy, M.-DFL
Dauids-R	Pelowski-DFL
Dean-R	Rukavina-DFL
Eastlund-R	Scott-R
Hansen-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Juhnke-DFL	Urdahl-R
Lanning-R	Wagenius-DFL
Lieder-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Jenny Nash.....296-4122

Committee Legislative Assistant

Laurie Nistl.....296-5497

Cultural and

Outdoor Resources Finance Division

343 State Office Building296-2676
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 14

Chair: Murphy, M.-DFL

Vice Chair: Morgan-DFL

Republican Lead: Davids-R

Brown-DFL	Wagenius-DFL
Eken-DFL	Carlson-DFL
Hausman-DFL	ex-officio**
Haws-DFL	Hansen-DFL
Howes-R	ex-officio**
Lillie-DFL	Kahn-DFL
Loeffler-DFL	ex-officio**
Mack-R	Solberg-DFL
Torkelson-R	ex-officio**
Urdahl-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Kerry Kinney Fine.....296-7427

Committee Legislative Assistant

Phil Chen296-5360

Early Childhood Finance and Policy Division

403 State Office Building296-7807
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.
in Room 200*

Members: 14

Chair: Slawik-DFL

Vice Chair: Rosenthal-DFL

Republican Lead: Downey-R

Bly-DFL	Nornes-R
Buesgens-R	Peterson, S.-DFL
Greiling-DFL	Ward-DFL
Hamilton-R	Carlson-DFL
Jackson-DFL	ex-officio**
Laine-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Mack-R	ex-officio**
Mariani-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Sara Benzkofer296-4305

Committee Legislative Assistant

Matthew Collie296-4483

Energy Finance and Policy Division

559 State Office Building296-4308
Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:45 p.m.
in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 21

Chair: Hilty-DFL

Vice Chair: Falk-DFL

Republican Lead: Westrom-R

Anderson, B.-R	Knuth-DFL
Atkins-DFL	Magnus-R
Beard-R	Nornes-R
Bly-DFL	Obermueller-DFL
Brynaert-DFL	Persell-DFL
Gunther-R	Sailer-DFL
Hackbarth-R	Wolti-DFL
Hoppe-R	Carlson-DFL
Jackson-DFL	ex-officio**
Johnson-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Kalin-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Andy Pomroy296-4180

Committee Legislative Assistant

Rebekah Smith296-8879

Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division

449 State Office Building296-4200
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.
in Room 5*

Members: 17

Chair: Wagenius-DFL

Vice Chair: Persell-DFL

Republican Lead: Hackbarth-R

Anderson, S.-R	Knuth-DFL
Anzelc-DFL	Lillie-DFL
Clark-DFL	McNamara-R
Dill-DFL	Scalze-DFL
Doty-DFL	Torkelson-R
Gunther-R	Carlson-DFL
Hamilton-R	ex-officio**
Hansen-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Hortman-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Jenna Duenhoegger296-1774

Committee Legislative Assistant

Melissa Hysing296-3367

Health Care and Human Services Finance Division

585 State Office Building296-2228
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
at 1:00 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 22

Chair: Huntley-DFL

Vice Chair/

Republican Lead Health Care Finance:

Abeler-R

Republican Lead Human Services Finance:

Dean-R

Anzelc-DFL	Peppin-R
Brod-R	Peterson, S.-DFL
Bunn-DFL	Ruud-DFL
Emmer-R	Scalze-DFL
Fritz-DFL	Slawik-DFL
Gottwalt-R	Thao-DFL
Hayden-DFL	Thissen-DFL
Hosch-DFL	Carlson-DFL
Kiffmeyer-R	ex-officio**
Liebling-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Murphy, E.-DFL	ex-officio**
Otremba-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Jenn Holcomb296-6422

Committee Legislative Assistant

Jan Horner296-5496

Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance and Policy Division

477 State Office Building296-0170
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.
in Room 5*

Members: 21

Chair: Rukavina-DFL

Vice Chair: Bly-DFL

Republican Lead Workforce: Anderson, S.-R

Republican Lead Higher Ed.: Nornes-R

Atkins-DFL	Norton-DFL
Brynaert-DFL	Obermueller-DFL
Clark-DFL	Poppe-DFL
Dettmer-R	Reinert-DFL
Downey-R	Slocum-DFL
Eastlund-R	Wolti-DFL
Gunther-R	Carlson-DFL
Haws-DFL	ex-officio**
Mahoney-DFL	Solberg-DFL
McFarlane-R	ex-officio**
Murphy, M.-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Kerry Kinney Fine296-7427

Committee Legislative Assistant

Sue Scott296-8827

Bioscience and Workforce Development Policy and Oversight Division

591 State Office Building296-4277
Meets: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30
a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 14

Chair: Mahoney-DFL

Vice Chair: Obermueller-DFL

Republican Lead: Gottwalt-R

Anderson, B.-R	Norton-DFL
Beard-R	Peppin-R
Brynaert-DFL	Poppe-DFL
Haws-DFL	Slocum-DFL
Hilty-DFL	Winkler-DFL
Mack-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Joanna Dornfeld296-9302

Committee Legislative Assistant

Dianne Ruppert296-4279

Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division

471 State Office Building296-0294
Meets: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 14

Chair: Clark-DFL

Vice Chair: Laine-DFL

Republican Lead: Severson-R

Benson-DFL	Rosenthal-DFL
Bly-DFL	Sailer-DFL
Hayden-DFL	Scott-R
Howes-R	Carlson-DFL
Huntley-DFL	ex-officio**
McFarlane-R	Solberg-DFL
McNamara-R	ex-officio**
Morgan-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brooke Bordson296-5528

Committee Legislative Assistant

Jacob Johnson.....296-5998

K-12 Education Finance Division

381 State Office Building296-5387
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 21

Chair: Greiling-DFL

Vice Chair: Ward-DFL

Republican Lead: Garofalo-R

Anderson, P-R	Marquart-DFL
Anzelc-DFL	McFarlane-R
Benson-DFL	Morgan-DFL
Brown-DFL	Newton-DFL
Buesgens-R	Slocum-DFL
Davnie-DFL	Swails-DFL
Demmer-R	Tillberry-DFL
Dettmer-R	Carlson-DFL
Dittrich-DFL	ex-officio**
Doepke-R	Solberg-DFL
Mariani-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Shannon Patrick.....296-5098

Committee Legislative Assistant

Elizabeth Mandelman.....296-9676

Public Safety Finance Division

543 State Office Building296-4199
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 17

Chair: Paymar-DFL

Vice Chair: Olin-DFL

Republican Lead: Kohls-R

Bigham-DFL	Liebling-DFL
Cornish-R	Reinert-DFL
Eastlund-R	Severson-R
Haws-DFL	Smith-R
Hilstrom-DFL	Ward-DFL
Hosch-DFL	Carlson-DFL
Kelly-R	ex-officio**
Laine-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Lesch-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Melanie McMahon.....296-4141

Committee Legislative Assistant

Libby Wyrum296-5999

State Government Finance Division

365 State Office Building296-4257
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 14

Chair: Kahn-DFL

Vice Chair: Winkler-DFL

Republican Lead: Peppin-R

Bigham-DFL	Poppe-DFL
Downey-R	Sanders-R
Holberg-R	Simon-DFL
Kalin-DFL	Carlson-DFL
Kath-DFL	ex-officio**
Kiffmeyer-R	Solberg-DFL
Koenen-DFL	ex-officio**
Masin-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brian Shekleton.....296-4110

Committee Legislative Assistant

Krysta Niedernhofer296-7173

Transportation Finance and Policy Division

423 State Office Building296-5091
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 20

Chair: Lieder-DFL

Vice Chair: Champion-DFL

Republican Lead: Beard-R

Demmer-R	Newton-DFL
Doepke-R	Reinert-DFL
Hausman-DFL	Scott-R
Holberg-R	Severson-R
Hornstein-DFL	Swails-DFL
Hortman-DFL	Wolti-DFL
Magnus-R	Carlson-DFL
Masin-DFL	ex-officio**
Morgan-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Morrow-DFL	ex-officio**
Nelson-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Abbey Mahin.....296-5413

Committee Legislative Assistant

Susie Maher296-5494

Transportation and Transit Policy and Oversight Division

437 State Office Building296-9281
Meets: Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 16

Chair: Hornstein-DFL

Vice Chair: Swails-DFL

Republican Lead: Urdahl-R

Champion-DFL	McFarlane-R
Davids-R	Morrow-DFL
Hausman-DFL	Rosenthal-DFL
Holberg-R	Torkelson-R
Hortman-DFL	Wolti-DFL
Lieder-DFL	Zellers-R
Masin-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Abbey Mahin.....296-5413

Committee Legislative Assistant

Susie Maher296-5494

Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight

351 State Office Building296-5375
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
at 2:45 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 20

Chair: Thissen-DFL

Vice Chair: Liebling-DFL

Republican Lead: Abeler-R

Brod-R	Laine-DFL
Bunn-DFL	Loeffler-DFL
Emmer-R	Mack-R
Fritz-DFL	Murphy, E.-DFL
Gardner-DFL	Norton-DFL
Gottwalt-R	Ruud-DFL
Hayden-DFL	Thao-DFL
Huntley-DFL	Torkelson-R
Kelly-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Kate Perushek.....296-3244

Committee Legislative Assistant

Urszula Gryska296-5492

Licensing Division

359 State Office Building296-5158
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 8

Chair: Thao-DFL

Vice Chair: Bunn-DFL

Republican Lead: Dean-R

Abeler-R	Norton-DFL
Emmer-R	Ruud-DFL
Murphy, E.-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Kate Perushek.....296-3244

Committee Legislative Assistant

Vickie Benson.....296-5526

K-12 Education Policy and Oversight

563 State Office Building296-9714
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thurs-
days at 8:30 a.m. in the Basement Hearing
Room*

Members: 22

Chair: Mariani-DFL

Vice Chair: Kath-DFL

Republican Lead: McFarlane-R

Abeler-R	Loon-R
Benson-DFL	Murdock-R
Brynaert-DFL	Newton-DFL
Davnie-DFL	Nornes-R
Demmer-R	Norton-DFL
Dittrich-DFL	Obermueller-DFL
Doepke-R	Peterson, S.-DFL
Downey-R	Slawik-DFL
Faust-DFL	Swails-DFL
Greiling-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christina Gosack.....296-5524

Committee Legislative Assistant

Celeste Marin296-9115

Public Safety Policy and Oversight

379 State Office Building296-3709
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.
in Room 10*

Members: 17

Chair: Hilstrom-DFL

Vice Chair: Bigham-DFL

Republican Lead: Anderson, B.-R

Cornish-R	Lesch-DFL
Drazkowski-R	Masin-DFL
Jackson-DFL	Mullery-DFL
Johnson-DFL	Olin-DFL
Kath-DFL	Paymar-DFL
Kelly-R	Rosenthal-DFL
Kohls-R	Shimanski-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Peter Strohmeier296-5069

Committee Legislative Assistant

Erin Huppert.....296-2585

Crime Victims/Criminal Records Division

537 State Office Building296-4224
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 8

Chair: Lesch-DFL

Vice Chair: Shimanski-R

Bigham-DFL	Kohls-R
Hilstrom-DFL	Loon-R
Kath-DFL	Olin-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Patrick Baldwin296-4283

Committee Legislative Assistant

Erin Huppert.....296-2585

Rules and Legislative Administration

459 State Office Building296-0172
Meets: At the call of the chair in (No Room
Assigned)*

Members: 23

Chair: Sertich-DFL

Vice Chair: Hayden-DFL

Republican Lead: Gunther-R

Anderson, B.-R	Loeffler-DFL
Carlson-DFL	Magnus-R
Dettmer-R	Murphy, E.-DFL
Dill-DFL	Pelowski-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL	Peterson, S.-DFL
Hoppe-R	Seifert-R
Hortman-DFL	Simon-DFL
Howes-R	Solberg-DFL
Juhnke-DFL	Westrom-R
Lillie-DFL	Winkler-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Lisa Radzak.....296-2909

Committee Legislative Assistant

Thomas Dicklich.....296-9183

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

491 State Office Building296-8637
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
at 8:30 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 19

Chair: Pelowski-DFL

Vice Chair: Poppe-DFL

Republican Lead: Emmer-R

Anderson, P.-R	Lanning-R
Buesgens-R	Marquart-DFL
Gottwalt-R	Morrow-DFL
Hilty-DFL	Nelson-DFL
Hornstein-DFL	Sanders-R
Kahn-DFL	Simon-DFL
Kalin-DFL	Sterner-DFL
Kiffmeyer-R	Winkler-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Mark Mallander296-5389

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathy Anderson.....296-3806

Local Government Division

569 State Office Building296-3751
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 11

Chair: Nelson-DFL

Vice Chair: Sterner-DFL

Republican Lead: Eastlund-R

Beard-R	Lanning-R
Buesgens-R	Scalze-DFL
Hilty-DFL	Winkler-DFL
Hornstein-DFL	Pelowski-DFL
Kalin-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christine Murphy296-5491

Committee Legislative Assistant

Jennifer Witt296-7881

Taxes

509 State Office Building296-4218
Meets: Mondays at 2:45 p.m. and Tuesdays and
Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 30

Chair: Lenczewski-DFL

Vice Chair: Reinert-DFL

Republican Lead: Brod-R

Anderson, S.-R	Lanning-R
Carlson-DFL	Lesch-DFL
Dauids-R	Liebling-DFL
Davnie-DFL	Loeffler-DFL
Demmer-R	Loon-R
Dill-DFL	Marquart-DFL
Dittrich-DFL	Mullery-DFL
Downey-R	Murphy, E.-DFL
Eastlund-R	Rukavina-DFL
Gardner-DFL	Ruud-DFL
Garofalo-R	Solberg-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL	Tillberry-DFL
Koenen-DFL	Zellers-R
Kohls-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Sarah Carlson Wallrath296-8826

Committee Legislative Assistant

Sasha Bergman296-2955

Property and Local Sales Tax Division

597 State Office Building296-6829
Meets: Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 11

Chair: Marquart-DFL

Vice Chair: Dittrich-DFL

Republican Lead: Lanning-R

Dettmer-R	Loeffler-DFL
Garofalo-R	Mullery-DFL
Koenen-DFL	Scott-R
Lenczewski-DFL	Tillberry-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Sarah Carlson Wallrath296-8826

Committee Legislative Assistant

Paul Cumings296-5380

Ways and Means

443 State Office Building296-2365
Meets: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. or call of the
chair in Room 200*

Members: 27

Chair: Solberg-DFL

Vice Chair: Faust-DFL

Republican Lead: Holberg-R

Abeler-R	Lenczewski-DFL
Brynaert-DFL	Mahoney-DFL
Bunn-DFL	Mariani-DFL
Carlson-DFL	McNamara-R
Dauids-R	Nelson-DFL
Dean-R	Otremba-DFL
Demmer-R	Ruud-DFL
Eken-DFL	Scalze-DFL
Hamilton-R	Swails-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL	Tillberry-DFL
Hoppe-R	Westrom-R
Huntley-DFL	Seifert-R
Kahn-DFL	ex-officio**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brian Shekleton296-4110

Committee Legislative Assistant

Gerrie Boice296-5388

Monday, Jan. 12

HF1-Sertich (DFL)

Finance

State partnership created with federal efforts to restore the American economy, federal Economic Rescue and Recovery Act supplemented, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF2-Greiling (DFL)

Finance

School finance system modified and new education funding framework created.

HF3-Welti (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Unnecessary state mandates eliminated.

HF4-Mahoney (DFL)

Commerce and Labor

New base period for calculating benefits and a limited extension of benefits provided.

HF5-Kalin (DFL)

Finance

Green infrastructure state plan development required by the commissioner of commerce, funding provided for energy-efficient residences, public buildings, renewable energy for public schools, green industrial parks and a solar certification laboratory.

HF6-Solberg (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Budget recommendation development specified and state agencies required to provide information, fiscal note request disclosure required, state budget requirement modified, General Fund cash flow forecast required, notice of deficiency requests deadline imposed, whistleblower protection provided for state employees, budget-working group required and obsolete requirements eliminated.

HF7-Winkler (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Laws prohibiting misuse of state funds clarified and strengthened.

HF8-Simon (DFL)

Civil Justice

Minnesota False Claims Act established.

HF9-Davnie (DFL)

Commerce and Labor

Minnesota Subprime Borrower Relief Act of 2009 provided.

HF10-Doty (DFL)

Finance

2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF11-Sertich (DFL)

Finance

State partnership created with federal efforts to restore the American economy, federal Economic Rescue and Recovery Act funding outlined, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF12-Mahoney (DFL)

Commerce and Labor

Unemployment compensation definitions modified.

HF13-Juhnke (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

State designer selection board abolished.

HF14-Hamilton (R)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Jackson County; process provided to make office of county auditor-treasurer appointive.

HF15-Slawik (DFL)

Finance

Early childhood program established for at-risk four-year-olds.

HF16-Dettmer (R)

Finance

Hugo; grant provided for tornado relief.

HF17-Sertich (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Central Iron Range Sanitary Sewer District authorized.

HF18-Hansen (DFL)

Finance

Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council support provided.

HF19-Mullery (DFL)

Commerce and Labor

Postponement provided for property sales.

HF20-Winkler (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Web site required with a searchable database of state expenditures.

HF21-Juhnke (DFL)

Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs

Farm unit conservation plan program created, conservation plan required for participation in a state cost-share program and farmland conservation task force created.

HF22-Juhnke (DFL)

Environment Policy and Oversight

Anglers permitted to use two lines to take fish.

HF23-Norton (DFL)

Finance

New steam line from Olmsted Waste-to-Energy Facility to Rochester Community and Technical College Campus funding provided.

HF24-Peppin (R)

Energy Finance and Policy Division

New nuclear-powered electric generating plant need for construction certificate ban repealed.

HF25-Thissen (DFL)

Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight

Children's therapeutic services and supports modified.

HF26-Juhnke (DFL)

Environment Policy and Oversight

Fish spearing from a dark house allowed for non-residents.

HF27-Brod (R)

Taxes

Taxable value limited for reconstructed homes in a disaster area.

HF28-Fritz (DFL)

Finance

Wind generator at the Minnesota State Academies funding provided.

HF29-Benson (DFL)

Finance

Inflationary adjustment limitation removed.

HF30-Benson (DFL)

Finance

Alternative teacher compensation revenue inflationary adjustment added.

HF31-Hansen (DFL)

State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections

Presidential primary required to be held on the first Tuesday in February, public official definition expanded in campaign finance and public disclosure law, primaries required for election of soil and water conservation district supervisors.

HF32-Benson (DFL)

Finance

Special education revenue formulas full funding provided and appropriation for special education aid made open and standing.

HF33-Anderson, B. (R)

Energy Finance and Policy Division

New nuclear power plant certificate of need prohibition abolished.

HF34-Lesch (DFL)

Commerce and Labor

Mandatory arbitration clauses regulated.

HF35-Benson (DFL)

Finance

Referendum allowance limit eliminated.

HF36-Kohls (R)

Public Safety Policy and Oversight

Life imprisonment sentence provided for those convicted of three or more violent felonies.

HF37-Mullery (DFL)

Taxes

Research credit extended to individual income tax and portion of credit made refundable.

HF38-Benson (DFL)**Finance**

Location equity index created, general education revenue formula modified, and revenue for some school districts increased.

HF39-Slawik (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections**

Election required to fill a vacancy in the office of governor, special election procedure changed to fill a United States Senate vacancy, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF40-Peterson (DFL)**K-12 Education Policy and Oversight**

Quality rating and improvement system created for high-quality early learning and care programs.

HF41-Lesch (DFL)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

Plastic bag recycling provided.

HF42-Thissen (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight**

Four-month waiting period waived for unemployed people for MinnesotaCare.

HF43-Lesch (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight**

Public awareness campaign established for postpartum depression.

HF44-Lesch (DFL)**Taxes**

Housing opportunity area tax abatement program provided.

HF45-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Penalty provided for careless driving resulting in death and providing for revocation of violator's driver's license.

HF46-Mullery (DFL)**Civil Justice**

Grandparent visitation rights on behalf of the child provided, grandparent visitation rights expanded, procedures specified and mediation required.

HF47-Juhnke (DFL)**Finance**

Kandiyohi County veterans home funding provided.

HF48-Bigham (DFL)**Finance**

Red Rock Corridor Transit Way funding provided.

HF49-Morgan (DFL)**Finance**

Alternative teacher pay calculation for intermediate school districts modified.

HF50-Mullery (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections**

Absentee ballot treatment provided following a vacancy in nomination because of death or catastrophic illness.

HF51-Thissen (DFL)**Taxes**

Student loan payment credit allowed.

HF52-Mullery (DFL)**Taxes**

Additional city aid base provided for certain cities, limit on city aid appropriation increased, and aid required to be used for police and city attorney's office.

HF53-Murphy, E. (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight**

Pharmacy practice provision changed in administering influenza vaccines.

HF54-Hamilton (R)**Finance**

Jackson County; regional environmental science and nature education center funding provided.

HF55-Falk (DFL)**Finance**

Lac qui Parle Valley; transfer of funds authorized for ISD 2853.

HF56-Hosch (DFL)**Finance**

Stearns County; grantee for parks appropriation corrected.

HF57-Emmer (R)**State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections**

Voters required to provide picture identification before receiving a ballot, issuance of voter identification card provided at no charge, and provisional balloting procedure established.

HF58-Mullery (DFL)**K-12 Education Policy and Oversight**

Middle school students taught about the juvenile and criminal justice systems and the consequences of delinquent and criminal conduct.

HF59-Mullery (DFL)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

Environmental Justice Act established.

HF60-Hamilton (R)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

State trail established.

HF61-Mullery (DFL)**Taxes**

Health insurance premiums subtraction allowed.

HF62-Atkins (DFL)**Taxes**

Inver Grove Heights; sales tax exemptions provided for the expansion, remodeling, or improvement of the public safety building and city hall.

HF63-Atkins (DFL)**Finance**

Inver Grove Heights; appropriating money for the completion of Heritage Village Park.

HF64-Atkins (DFL)**Transportation Finance and Policy Division**

Dakota County; Rock Island Swing Bridge removal prohibited for two years.

HF65-Mullery (DFL)**K-12 Education Policy and Oversight**

Public school students required to complete service learning hours as a condition of graduating from high school.

HF66-Mullery (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Misdemeanor penalties increased.

HF67-Mullery (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Gross misdemeanor created for assaulting a utility employee or contractor.

HF68-Mullery (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Consecutive sentencing allowed when an offender commits one or more additional crimes between the time of the commission of one crime and the time of sentencing on that crime, and Sentencing Guidelines Commission directed to make consistent guidelines.

HF69-Mullery (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Violent offender's consent for on-demand searches provided as a condition of being released on probation, supervised release or parole.

HF70-Mullery (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Pharmacies required to provide certain drug purchase information to law enforcement.

HF71-Greiling (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections**

Conference committee communications required to be open to the public, budget negotiations required, and bill and budget negotiations between governor and legislative leaders required to be open to the public.

HF72-Norton (DFL)**Finance**

Lifelong learning account program established, tax credits allowed to employers and employees for contributions to lifelong learning accounts, funding provided and money appropriated.

HF73-Lieder (DFL)**Finance**

General Fund money transfer to state airports fund required.

HF74-Mullery (DFL)**Civil Justice**

Attorney fees provided for invalid medical assistance liens.

HF75-Brown (DFL)**Finance**

Pupil unit count increased for all-day, every day kindergarten pupils.

HF76-Lesch (DFL)**Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division**

Uniform residential tenant reports provided.

HF77-Mullery (DFL)**Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health
Finance Division**

Tenant applicant screening fee provisions modified.

HF78-Eastlund (R)**Finance**

2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF79-Brown (DFL)**Finance**

Wind energy production tax removed from county apportionment deduction for school districts.

HF80-Mullery (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

Consumer credit score or history use prohibited by insurers in underwriting automobile insurance policies.

HF81-Lesch (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

Discrimination in auto insurance based upon geographical area prohibited.

HF82-Mullery (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

Discrimination in auto insurance based upon geographic location within the Twin Cities metropolitan area prohibited.

HF83-Huntley (DFL)**Finance**

Duluth; new terminal facilities funding provided for the Duluth airport.

HF84-Mullery (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

Consumer fraud regulated.

HF85-Juhnke (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Mounting global positioning systems on windshields authorized.

HF86-Hortman (DFL)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

Carbon intensity reduction standard established for transportation fuels.

HF87-Mullery (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform,
Technology and Elections**

Judicial candidate voluntary conduct restrictions established, and ballot format for judicial elections modified.

HF88-Atkins (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

State and airline company full agreement enforcement required.

HF89-Kohls (R)**State and Local Government Operations Reform,
Technology and Elections**

Immigration law enforcement noncooperation ordinances and policies prohibited, and immigration-related data use provided.

HF90-Mullery (DFL)**Civil Justice**

General exemption provided for certain property owned by a debtor.

HF91-Slocum (DFL)**Finance**

Health and safety revenue modified to include elevator repair costs.

HF92-Murphy, M. (DFL)**Finance**

Duluth; Lake Superior Zoo facility repairs funding provided.

HF93-Mullery (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Courts permitted to impose consecutive sentences for certain repeat offenders.

HF94-Mahoney (DFL)**Finance**

Bikeway directed to be added to Lafayette Bridge when rebuilt.

HF95-Lenczewski (DFL)**Taxes**

Health insurance premium credit created.

HF96-Lesch (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and
Oversight**

Clinical trial registration provided.

HF97-Solberg (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

Convention centers authorized to obtain liquor licenses.

HF98-Hamilton (R)**Finance**

Windom; Fourth Avenue bridge replacement funding provided.

Thursday, Jan. 15**HF99-Atkins (DFL)****Taxes**

Minnesota Land Conservation Property Tax Law created.

HF100-Winkler (DFL)**Civil Justice**

I-35W Bridge collapse survivor compensation process provisions clarified, indemnification rights specified, records of the special master panel access limited, testimonial privileges specified and third-party subrogation or recovery claims prohibition clarified.

HF101-Kalin (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform,
Technology and Elections**

Taylors Falls; border city development zone powers established.

HF102-Slawik (DFL)**Taxes**

Oakdale; technical corrections made in the city's authority to establish tax increment financing districts.

HF103-Atkins (DFL)**Civil Justice**

Single occurrence liability cap removed and cross references conformed.

HF104-Dittrich (DFL)**Finance**

Permanent school fund revenue required to be set aside for school technology purposes.

HF105-Dittrich (DFL)**K-12 Education Policy and Oversight**

Financial literacy curriculum incorporated into the economics course required for high school graduation and money appropriated.

HF106-Swails (DFL)**K-12 Education Policy and Oversight**

P-20 education partnership established.

HF107-Emmer (R)**Finance**

School boards authorized to spend staff development revenue on CPR and automatic external defibrillator training and first aid certification.

HF108-Thissen (DFL)**Finance**

Seat belt violation made a primary offense in all seating positions regardless of age.

HF109-Dettmer (R)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

Watershed districts and watershed management organizations required to submit information to counties.

HF110-Anzelc (DFL)**Finance**

Irv Anderson Memorial Highway designated.

HF111-Winkler (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform,
Technology and Elections**

Divestment required from certain investments relating to Iran.

HF112-Nelson (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and
Oversight**

Intermediate care facilities for persons with developmental disabilities licensure authorized to replace one larger facility, and transition period rate and payment rate for the new facilities established.

HF113-Dean (R)**Finance**

Professional education loan forgiveness program expanded for child mental health professionals.

HF114-Garofalo (R)**Transportation Finance and Policy Division**

Interstate 35E speed limit designated as 55 mph from West Seventh Street to marked Interstate 94 in St. Paul.

HF115-Lesch (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Dog owners required to take responsible dog owner classes and pass certain tests, and database required.

HF116-Ward (DFL)**Transportation Finance and Policy Division**

Type III school bus driver qualifications modified.

HF117-Solberg (DFL)**Finance**

Deficiency funding provided for Public Safety and Human Services departments.

HF118-Hosch (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Emergency vehicle status accorded to vehicles operated by protective agent for escorting funeral procession or oversized loads.

HF119-Hosch (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections**

Local governments authorized to regulate use of escort motorcycles or vehicles by licensed protective agents.

HF120-Hosch (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight**

Rural health cooperative arrangement oversight established.

HF121-Sailer (DFL)**Finance**

Clearwater County Veterans Memorial Highway designated.

HF122-Dill (DFL)**State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections**

Disability benefit application deadline exception provided for general state employees retirement plan of the Minnesota State Retirement System.

HF123-Dill (DFL)**Finance**

General Fund money required to be transferred to state airports fund.

HF124-Liebling (DFL)**Finance**

High-speed rail line between Chicago and the Twin Cities through Rochester funding provided.

HF125-Fritz (DFL)**Finance**

Minnesota state academies campus graduate housing funding provided.

HF126-Mahoney (DFL)**Energy Finance and Policy Division**

Nuclear power plant certificate of need prohibition abolished.

HF127-Holberg (R)**Commerce and Labor**

Motor vehicle definition clarified in statutory provision deeming the driver to be the agent of the owner in case of accident.

HF128-Dill (DFL)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

Bow and gun case requirements removed.

HF129-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Electronic devices prohibited to sexually solicit children.

HF130-Bigham (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Predatory offenders prohibited from accessing and using social networking Web sites which require registration.

HF131-Swails (DFL)**K-12 Education Policy and Oversight**

Temporary, alternative graduation requirements established for high school seniors who do not receive a passing score on a state GRAD test, and notations of high school student achievement authorized.

HF132-Cornish (R)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

All-terrain vehicle operation allowed on county roads.

HF133-Garofalo (R)**Finance**

Dakota County; Highway 3 funding provided.

HF134-Garofalo (R)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Careless driving resulting in death classified as a gross misdemeanor.

HF135-Bly (DFL)**Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight**

All necessary health care availability and affordability guaranteed for every Minnesotan, establishing Minnesota Health Plan, Minnesota Health Board, Minnesota Health Fund, Office of Health Quality and Planning, patient advocacy ombudsman and inspector general for the Minnesota Health Plan.

HF136-Koenen (DFL)**Taxes**

Emergency services special taxing district sunset date eliminated.

HF137-Otremba (DFL)**Taxes**

Agricultural products for purposes of property taxation definition expanded.

HF138-Morrow (DFL)**Finance**

School finance system modified and new education funding framework created.

HF139-Doty (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Domestic violence awareness month designated for month of October.

HF140-Garofalo (R)**Taxes**

Certain pet sales exempted from sales taxes.

HF141-Hackbarth (R)**Energy Finance and Policy Division**

Nuclear power plant certificate of need moratorium abolished.

HF142-Kalin (DFL)**Finance**

Lindstrom; Trunk Highway 8 funding provided.

HF143-Kalin (DFL)**Finance**

Chisago County; nursing facilities payment rate increased to geographic group III median rate.

HF144-Dittrich (DFL)**Transportation Finance and Policy Division**

Transportation commissioner directed to enter into agreements with radio and television media for public service announcements in exchange for traffic information.

HF145-Hilstrom (DFL)**Public Safety Policy and Oversight**

Methamphetamine precursor drug logs maintained by retailers retention time period specified and inspection of logs provided to be open to law enforcement.

HF146-Doty (DFL)**Finance**

Upsala; regional community center funding provided.

HF147-Doty (DFL)**Finance**

Motley; Tri-County Regional Services Center funding provided.

HF148-Doty (DFL)**Finance**

Pierz; Highway 25 reconstruction funding provided.

HF149-Demmer (R)**Taxes**

Residential heating fuel sales tax exemption expanded.

HF150-Anzelc (DFL)**Environment Policy and Oversight**

All-terrain vehicle use allowed by the disabled along certain trails, and hunting provisions for disabled hunters modified.

HF151-Mahoney (DFL)**Taxes**

Apprenticeship training facilities property tax exemption extended to land on which the building is located.

HF152-Juhnke (DFL)**Finance**

Seed potato inspection fee statute technical changes made.

HF153-Davids (R)**Finance**

2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF154-Hansen (DFL)**Finance**

Highway 52 barrier replacement funding provided.

HF155-Anzelc (DFL)**Commerce and Labor**

Sunday liquor sales allowed; tax receipts dedicated to county social services for children, and fund created.

HF156-Doty (DFL)**Finance**

Morrison County; New Platte River Watershed dam funding provided.

If you have Internet access, visit the Legislature's
Web page at: www.leg.mn

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sure you have enough of a reserve in place to make necessary changes. If you have a budget reserve, you should be able to use it in times like these, but you don't have one."

Kiedrowski, a former state finance commissioner, said therein lays the problem. "The beauty of this (report) is it's all in the fundamentals. This is absolutely the right time to put these recommendations to use because there is no pressure. The public doesn't want to implement them because when times are good they want you to spend and reduce taxes." But, he said, the good times never go on forever.

He added that commission members found the report very sobering. "There's a harsh reality facing us. It would be nice to have recommendations to grow the economy faster in Minnesota. We have a structural imbalance."

Some final recommendations include:

- releasing a demographic forecast at the start of each biennium;
- creating a permanent long-range planning function in state government;
- if the budget reserve is depleted in the current biennium, it should be replenished within two biennia; and
- the governor and Legislature should create a structurally balanced budget for the current and following biennia.

"The reality is that these recommendations don't mean anything unless you follow through," Goodno said. "You have the ability to change those statutes. It's up to you to decide if there's a will to do that." 


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In addition to more review and security steps, Lori Mo, assistant commissioner with the accounting services division, said the department has asked agencies to further review employees that have incompatible accounting system duties, and remove access where possible.


Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope) sponsors SF57 that would, in part, require legislative auditor recommendations be tracked by the finance commissioner to ensure implementation. The bill, which has no House companion, awaits action by the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

What else can the Legislature do?

Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) lamented that the Legislature doesn't have the time to do oversight as well as it should. "We rely very heavily on you and others to bring to our attention these lapses and opportunity for

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reform. It's even more important this year. ... If we're trying to strive for maximum taxpayer value this is a way to get it."

Nobles said the best thing members can do is continue to support office efforts, be explicit in expectations on agency spending, keep a focus on the issue, and be mindful of position eliminations due to budget cuts. Cutting an agency from three account clerks to one, he said, could make separation of duties more difficult. 

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political science, public policy, history or international relations in college. The program isn't necessarily about forming future politicians, Zekowski said, but active citizens.


"I think it makes people want to step up

and do something," he said. "Even if you're not interested in pursuing a political career, it makes people better voters and better constituents to their legislators."

Adults involved with Youth in Government say the teenagers' enthusiasm offers a sure cure for jaded attitudes.

Rhonda Fox, an advisor to the Henry Sibley High School group and parent of a participant, said she's impressed with how deeply engaged students become in the program. "This is becoming their home. They will know how to effect change. They won't be afraid to try."

"It breaks down cynicism," said Program Manager Chris Rasinen.

After 17 years with the program, first as a participant, then a volunteer and now a staff member, he looks forward to a new session every January. "It's cold and you smell the bus fumes. It's time to go to the Capitol. It's that time of year." 

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— M. COOK

Sources: Presentations by Grant Duwe, Corrections Department research and evaluation manager, and Suzanne Alliegro, executive director of the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission, to the House Public Safety Policy and Oversight Committee Jan. 13; Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission Report to the Legislature, January 2009; Minnesota Board of Pardons Annual Report to the Legislature, February 2008; Department of Corrections Web site.

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