

# CAPITOL UPDATE



## State Representative Joe Atkins



APRIL 2005

### **INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, SOUTH SAINT PAUL BENEFIT FROM STATE BONDING BILL**

When the state passed its bonding bill last week, the communities of Inver Grove Heights and South Saint Paul were two of the primary beneficiaries.

Inver Grove Heights will receive funding for additional classrooms at Inver Hills Community College, for a flood mitigation project along the Mississippi River, and for open space preservation.

In South Saint Paul, there is funding to reclaim a former landfill and upgrade it into a riverside park. This parcel, Port Crosby, is regarded as one of the most scenic in the city in spite of its past use as a fill site.

State Representative Joe Atkins, an author of each of the four projects, described the projects as “long overdue.” He said all of the projects gained strong bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate. Atkins said all of the area’s local legislators, including Senators Metzen and Marko and Representatives Sieben and Hansen, worked closely together to generate support from legislators from all over the state and from Governor Pawlenty.



The additional classrooms at Inver Hills will serve a student population that has grown thirty-seven percent in five years. Representative Atkins is not surprised at the growth. “Inver Hills offers a great education at a good price. It’s a great value for students and a terrific amenity for our community,” he said.

Additional funding in the bonding bill will go for flood protection along the Mississippi and for preservation of high quality open space in Inver Grove Heights.

Get this summary by E-mail! Send a note with your e-mail address to: [rep.joe.atkins@house.mn](mailto:rep.joe.atkins@house.mn)

# April 2005 Legislative Survey

1.) Please rank the following state issues in terms of their importance to you:

- School funding
- Gay marriage
- Stadium funding
- Transportation/congestion
- Health care costs
- Higher education costs
- Casino gambling
- Crime
- Taxes
- Environment
- Other

2.) Do you support a bill that would require every homeowner to pay \$36/year to clean up polluted streams, lakes and rivers in Minnesota?

Yes  No

3.) Do you believe Tax Increment Financing is overused and should be more restricted?

Yes  No

4.) A \$0.90 per pack cigarette tax has been proposed to fund state health care costs and reduce teen smoking. Do you support this?

Yes  No

You can either mail or e-mail your responses to Representative Atkins' office. Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## REPRESENTATIVE ATKINS'S "2020" GROUP LOOKS FOR LONG-TERM VISION

Joined by a bipartisan group of a dozen Senators and Representatives, Rep. Joe Atkins announced the formation of the "2020 Caucus" whose objective is to look for long-term solutions to issues like education and transportation funding, controlling health care costs, long-term care, and job growth.

"Too often, the vision of elected officials is too short, looking only for short-sighted solutions to get them through to the next election," Atkins said, "Our group is committed to finding answers for the long run."

By the year 2020, the face of Minnesota's population will change dramatically. For example, the average age will go up significantly as baby boomers move into retirement.

For the first time in state history, senior citizens will outnumber school-age children. Likewise, the state is expected to face an unprecedented decline in school enrollment.

"The impacts on health care costs and education funding will be mammoth," noted Atkins, "We need to anticipate these changes and plan ahead, rather than just react."

Atkins explained that the state's need to plan for the future is similar to the need for a typical family to do the same. "It's the same as a family's need to plan for retirement or plan for their child's education beyond high school; we need to look ahead to situations we will face down the road and be ready for them," he said.

**"Too often, the vision of elected officials is too short, looking only for short-sighted solutions to get them through to the next election."**

## TO REACH REP. JOE ATKINS

217 State Office Building ♦ 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. ♦ St. Paul, MN 55155  
(651) 296-4192 ♦ rep.joe.atkins@house.mn ♦ www.house.mn/39B