



State Representative District 27B

JEANNE POPPE

SESSION UPDATE

March 16, 2006

Dear Friends,
Welcome to my first email update of the 2006 legislative session. I will be sending these out weekly throughout the session with information about developments with the legislature, and general information that I hope you will find helpful.

As in the past, if you do not want to continue receiving this update, please call or email my office and ask to be removed from the mailing list.

I look forward to hearing from you throughout the session as I continue to work on your behalf.

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Bonding Bill

The primary task before us this session is to pass a bonding bill, which will fund work and infrastructure projects throughout the state. Typically, a capital investment (bonding for projects) bill is passed every two years. However, because the state legislature failed to reach a bipartisan consensus in 2004, it became the responsibility of the 2005 legislature.

Last week, I participated in two hearings for flood mitigation funding. I was joined for both hearings by Austin Mayor Bonnie Rietz and City Engineer Jon Erichson. On Thursday, we testified in front of Jobs and Economic Opportunity Policy and Finance Committee, which is chaired by Rep. Bob Gunther from Fairmont. We spoke on behalf of our proposal for employment and economic development grants to assist with rehabilitation and replacement of publicly owned infrastructure that was damaged by recent flooding in our area.

The next day, we testified in front of the Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, which is chaired by Rep. Dennis Ozment from Rosemount. Our bill for this committee asks for an additional \$5.7 million, this time for a flood hazard mitigation grant for the city of Austin for capital improvements to prevent or alleviate future flood damage.

I recognize this is a multi-phased project that we need to commit to focus on over the coming years. By laying the

groundwork now, we will build on last year's success and continue to rebuild past damage and protect our area against future flooding.

I have also introduced a bonding request for safety improvements at the Grand Meadow school, funding to help residents in the district with wastewater treatment improvements and additional funding for the Shooting Star Trail. In addition, I expect that Riverland Community College will receive some funding as part of the MnSCU package.

Hot issues

There are a variety of hot issues that legislators will face this session. Among them are eminent domain, immigration and stadiums. All of these issues have the possibility of creating divisiveness at the legislature and could divert us from the critical issues I would like to see us focus on: jobs, education and health care.

I am hopeful that on all these issues, reasonable heads will prevail and good policy decisions will come forward.

Check out these weekly publications to keep track of what's going on at the State Capitol:

House of Representatives:

Session Weekly:

www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/swmain.asp

State Senate:

Senate Briefly:

www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/briefly/