



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## State Representative Jeanne Poppe

### Minnesota House of Representatives

Dear friends,

Welcome to my first e-newsletter. I plan on using this format to keep you up-to-date on what is happening at the Capitol. I hope you will find it to be easy to read and informative.

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please ask!

**HOW TO REACH**  
**State**  
**Representative**  
**Jeanne**  
**Poppe**

**Office:**

231 State Office Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
(651) 296-4193  
Toll Free  
1-888-682-3180

**Home:**

900 Fourth St. NW  
Austin, MN 55912  
(507) 433-5687

**E-Mail:**

rep.jeanne.poppe@house.mn

### **Bonding bill stalled in Conference Committee**

Unfortunately, no real progress has been made on the state bonding bill. The bill is in Conference Committee, where members of the House and the Senate are working together to reach a final agreement. House and Senate negotiators met late into the night on Monday, and even though the difference between the two proposals is down to a \$70 million, they failed to reach an agreement.

The lead Republican on the Committee, Sen. Dan Dorman (Albert Lea) offered an \$880 million package to the group instead of the \$950 million plan that is the target. Dorman said he does not believe his fellow Republicans will pass the higher bonding bill.

At the onset it appeared as though both parties and the Governor were committed to swift passage of this bill, understanding how crucial it is for the creation of jobs and the commencement of much needed projects. The voters spoke loud and clear last election; they rejected last session's do-nothing legislature and sent the message that they want this jobs bill passed. It now appears that politics are hindering that passage.

### **Renewable Energy Bill aims to Reduce Foreign Dependence**

A group of House and Senate leaders last week announced legislation that would require at least 20 percent of electric energy in the state be derived from alternative renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass by the year 2020.

The creation of new energy at home means less dependence of sources of oil abroad. In addition, the move towards increased renewable sources of energy would be an economic stimulus for greater Minnesota. It allows for additional markets for agricultural products and creates technology and manufacturing jobs.

In addition, renewable energy sources are sound investments in the environment. Clean water, healthy fisheries and a pristine natural environment are key to the future of the tourist economy in our lakes region.

### **Ethanol bill to be heard this week**

A bill that would raise the required amount of ethanol in gasoline to 20%, up from the current 10%, by the year 2012 will be heard this week in the Transportation Finance Committee. The bill has already passed in the Senate and Governor Pawlenty supports it.

### **Bills to Combat Meth Abuse Advance**

The methamphetamine epidemic in Minnesota has a significant human cost. It also costs our local governments millions of dollars a year, taxes our law enforcement agencies, and chokes our prison system. This is an issue of particular concern for greater Minnesota. 75% of meth labs in the state are located in rural or semi-

rural areas. The fear is that for every lab law enforcement finds, there may be as many as 10 more out there.

In an attempt to limit meth production in the state, the House and Senate have taken action on different versions of bills to require changes in the regulation of over the counter sale of medications containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine—which are used as a key ingredient in meth production.

The Senate has unanimously passed their meth bill (SF51), which differs slightly from the House version.

The House bill requires that certain over the counter drugs be limited to two-package maximums, requires the drugs be held behind the counter, and allows only a pharmacist or pharmacy tech to sell the drugs. It also prohibits the sale to minor age children and requires buyers to show photo id for purchase and sign a log.

While I understand that some of the restrictions may be inconvenient for law-abiding residents, I believe that there is strong support for a tough approach to addressing the frightening meth epidemic.

## **Gambling**

The idea of the state going into the gambling business has also received a lot of attention as a way for the state to generate revenue. As is the case in the legislature, this idea is a bipartisan issue. After more than five hours of debate, the House Gaming Division passed two casino proposals last Friday.

One proposal allows White Earth, Leech Lake

and Red Lake bands of Chippewa to open a Twin Cities casino for their economically depressed members. The other bill establishes a casino at the Canterbury Park horseracing track in Shakopee. Both would be in partnership with the state. They face several more committee stops before a vote in the full House.

## **Proposal for additional school funding**

Last week Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) and Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) announced their intention to offer an amendment to the House Budget Resolution when it arrives on the floor for a vote, possibly as early as this week. The amendment will increase the maximum limit on general fund expenditures by \$750 million, with those funds directed to the K-12 education budget.

It is expected that an amendment such as this is unlikely to pass.

## **Take a Shot at Balancing the State Budget**

Minnesota Public Radio is giving you a chance to show state leaders how you would like to see the budget challenge addressed. Want to raise taxes? Cut state programs? Visit their “Budget Balancer” on MPR’s website at [www.mpr.org](http://www.mpr.org). When you have finished balancing the budget the way you feel is best for the future of the state of Minnesota, you may choose to email the plan to state leaders, including Governor Pawlenty.

**Please feel free to call or write if you have ideas or concerns  
you want to share about state or local issues.**

**I can be reached by phone at:**

**1-888-682-3180 or 1-651-296-4193**

**by mail at**

**231 State Office Building**

**100 Martin Luther King Blvd.**

**St. Paul, MN 55155**

**via e-mail at [rep.jeanne.poppe@house.mn](mailto:rep.jeanne.poppe@house.mn).**

**House Public Information  
175 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-2146**



**Senate Public Information:  
231 State Capitol  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-0504**