



You Can Reach
State Representative
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State Representative District 55A

LEON LILLIE

CAPITOL UPDATE

Dear Neighbors,

We are now more than halfway through the 2006 Legislative Session. It looks as though we're on track this year to finish the session on time and adjourn by May 22.

Our top agenda item this session is the bonding bill, which invests in public works projects through state borrowing. Both the House and Senate have passed bonding bills and will now appoint a conference committee to work out differences between the two versions. The total amount of state bonding in each bill is not far apart, and I expect the conference committee to come to agreement quickly.

A number of other issues will be decided in the next few weeks, ranging from property tax relief to stadiums. I would appreciate your input on these topics as the session heads toward completion.

Sincerely,



Rep. Leon Lillie and Sen. Chuck Wiger greet 5th graders from St. Peter's Catholic School in North St. Paul on a tour of the State Capitol.

Bonding

This year's bonding bill will include funding for important infrastructure projects across Minnesota from University buildings to state parks to roads. Locally, my proposal to make improvements to Bruentrup Heritage Farm in Maplewood was included in the Senate bonding bill, and both the House and Senate funded a new science building at Century College. I am optimistic that a final bonding bill will emerge quickly.

Budget and Property Tax Relief

Over the last four years, Minnesotans have seen their property taxes go up by over \$1 billion. That's because property tax payers are picking up the bill for more of the critical services the state used to pay for. I would like to provide permanent property tax relief to the families who have been hit hardest by these tax increases using the \$317 million state surplus currently in the Tax Relief Account.

Unfortunately, that surplus could disappear if the state loses the cigarette tax/fee court case heard last week by the Minnesota Supreme Court. Tobacco companies are claiming the "Health Impact Fee" violates their 1998 tobacco settlement with the state. If the fee were overturned, some legislators have suggested using property tax relief money to fill the hole.

Eminent Domain

Many Minnesotans are concerned that it might be too easy for government to use eminent domain to seize private homes. Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that local government could use the power of eminent domain to seize private property to turn over to another private owner for the purpose of economic development. Both the House and Senate have responded by passing legislation to restrict the use of eminent domain. This bill is now in conference committee.



Representative Leon Lillie, Father John R. Estrem
and Representative Nora Slawik



Representative Nora Slawik, Pastor Steve Nelson,
his son Tom Nelson (a State Representative from
Wisconsin) and Representative Leon Lillie

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