

State Representative District 55A

LEON LILLIE



Dear Neighbor,

Thank you again for your support in my first term in the Minnesota House of Representatives. I will continue to serve you with energy.

I have many goals for this session, but the major challenge remains the billion dollar-plus structural budget deficit we continue to face. Simple answers - such as "We should just raise taxes" or "We just need to cut wasteful spending" - are not enough. We must be creative, tough-minded, and clear in our priorities and we must take a long-term view.

I am also committed to making sure that we make the right investments in our state's schools, transportation infrastructure, and health care system. We need to keep our economy strong, and just like a business, a state cannot prosper without wise investment.

Since setting a budget whether for a family or for the state is in the end a question of priorities and values, your input will be critical. I want to hear from you. As always, please feel free to call or write with your ideas, questions, and comments.

Sincerely,

SESSION UPDATE

March 23, 2005



The DFL Freshman Class of 2005

*Front (l to r): Steve Simon, Bev Scalze, Tine Liebling, Larry Hosch, Diane Loeffler, Melissa Hortman, Frank Moe
Back (l to r): Denise Dittrich, Sandra Peterson, Jeanne Poppe, Leon Lillie, Patty Fritz, Andy Welti*

While learning the ropes at the State Capitol during my first month in office, I've discovered that I share more than just the first-term label with other members of the Legislative Class of 2004. My fellow freshman also share a common responsibility to get the Legislature working again and a basic agenda based on the "ABCs" of good government - Accountability, Balance and Common Sense.

During the past election, Minnesota voters put each of us in office because they trusted us to follow a few simple instructions: Quit the petty bickering, try to work together, and get things done for the common good. With those instructions in mind, our challenge is to help improve the culture at the Capitol.

As a result, I have joined with other freshman legislators to collaborate on key policy initiatives designed to advance this ABC agenda. We kicked off the accountability portion of our agenda by introducing a bill that would eliminate per diem payments to legislators in the event of a special session.

A special session is the last thing any of us wants, and hopefully, this will provide a little extra incentive for all of us at the Legislature to get our work done on time and get back to our jobs and families as soon as possible. We want to be faithful to Minnesota voters, so we freshman legislators have decided to collaborate where we can on select policy initiatives, of which this Per Diem bill is the first. We decided to address this issue first

because it fits in with the accountability portion of our agenda.

Of course, we won't always agree with each other. In fact, many of us hold sharply diverging views on important subjects. But despite our differences, we agree on certain basic principles that we hope will guide our joint efforts. We want to be accountable for the decisions and actions we take as legislators, we expect to share burdens and responsibilities in a fair manner, and we intend to focus on long-range solutions, not short term fixes.

I hope that this group will bring fresh approaches and new ideas to a process that has gotten bogged down in excessive partisanship over the past few years. We don't have all the answers, but I do think we understand that Minnesotans want a new approach that focuses on what's really important. Ultimately, we hope to have a meaningful impact on public policy and the legislative process by finding common ground.

YOU CAN REACH REP. LILLIE AT:

353 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

(651) 296-1188
e-mail: rep.leon.lillie@house.mn
website: www.house.mn/55A