

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Improving Schools

Education bills in 2015 and 2016 included important provisions to help move us toward our goal of giving every child in the state—regardless of ZIP code—a world-class education.

Education measures included:

- \$525 million more than we were projected to spend (\$1.4 billion more than the 2014-2015 budget) for a total of about \$17.2 billion in education spending. This includes a 2% increase each year on the per pupil funding formula.
- Historic investments in early childhood learning scholarships and school readiness programs.
- My provisions making the Medal of Honor character development curriculum available to all school districts programs.
- Requiring students in Minnesota's public schools to pass a citizenship test prior to high school graduation. The citizenship test can be one step toward building the knowledge base necessary to bring understanding and civic participation to future generations.
- My bill requiring the Department of Education to institute physical education benchmarks based on the most recent K-12 National Association of Sport and Physical Education guidelines.



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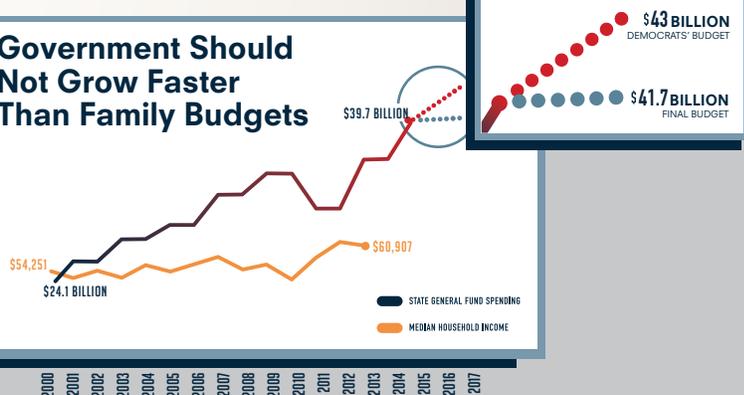
REFLECTIONS OF THE 2016 SESSION

Restoring Balance

House Republicans worked in both the 2015 and 2016 sessions to ensure that government spending did not grow faster than family budgets.

The bipartisan budget passed by the legislature in 2015 limited spending and left about \$800 million to address transportation and tax relief in the 2016 session, and to serve as a safety net in case of an economic downturn.

Government Should Not Grow Faster Than Family Budgets



Tax Relief

House Republicans successfully delivered nearly \$1 billion of tax relief over the next three years, including more than a half a billion in ongoing and permanent tax breaks. This was the most bipartisan tax bill in 30 years, with a total of 89% of legislators in both the House and Senate. Provisions in this bill included:



College Students

A first-in-the-nation tax credit up to \$1,000 for graduates paying off their student loans.



Families

Expanded child care tax credit for working parents and tax benefits for families who save for college.



Small Business

Property tax relief for small-business owners and job providers.



Farmers

Property tax relief on agricultural land for farmers.

After being vetoed by Governor Dayton, this bill now waits to be taken up again in a special session, if the Governor chooses to call one.

Working for Our Veterans

As Chair of the House Veterans Committee, I have led House Republicans in advocating for the interests of our active and retired military in Minnesota.

I advocated for the following reforms in 2015 and 2016:

- Making all veterans' retirement pensions tax-exempt. I have advocated for this exemption since I was first elected to office over a decade ago, and I am thrilled to see it pass and finally become law.
- \$17 million in funding for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs for state veterans homes.
- \$150,000 to the Department of Veterans Affairs to study and identify mental health needs in Minnesota's veteran community.
- Giving resident status to active military members residing in Minnesota to help them receive scholarships and grants for college.
- My provision simplifying and expediting the state certification application process for Veteran Owned Small Businesses and giving them preference points in state procurement contracts.
- My bill allowing the surviving spouse of a disabled veteran to permanently maintain the disabled veteran's property tax exemption, instead of having it expire in 8 years after the veteran's death.
- My request for \$113,000 in funding for the Big Marine Lake Disabled Veterans Rest Camp.

Roads & Bridges

House Republicans worked in both the 2015 and 2016 sessions to ensure that government spending did not grow faster than family budgets.

Highway Improvements

House Republicans passed major funding for key projects around the state including, Highway 97 and I-35 interchange. Unfortunately, in an effort to amend controversial Light Rail funding onto the bill, the Senate DFL derailed our previous agreement at the last-minute, causing the transportation funding and bonding bill to fail. We now wait for the Governor to call a special session.

No Gas Tax Increase

House Republicans stopped DFL attempts to increase the gas tax to historic levels.

Aid for Small Cities

Out of the over 800 cities in Minnesota, 84% of these communities received first-ever funding for local road and bridge repair thanks to House Republican-led initiatives.