

2017-2018 Legislative Review



State Representative
Anna Wills



District 57B

Proudly Representing **Apple Valley, Rosemount, and Coates**

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Dear Neighbor,

The 2017-2018 biennium will go down as one of the most productive in recent memory. Working under divided government, my colleagues and I completed the state budget, successfully advancing key priorities including:

- ✓ **The largest tax relief package for Minnesotans in nearly two decades.**
- ✓ **The largest investment in road and bridge infrastructure in state history without a gas tax increase.**
- ✓ **Nation-leading reforms to stop double-digit premium increases and expand health care options.**

I am especially proud to be a strong advocate for the Minnesota Zoo. Over the past two years I have secured \$10 million in state bonds for asset preservation and another \$3.5 million in Legacy funds for the Minnesota Zoo.

I was also honored to carry two bills to dedicate two bridges in our community to fallen heroes. In 2017, Governor Dayton signed my bill to dedicate the bridge over Highway 52 in Coates in honor of Corporal Benjamin S. Kopp. In 2018, my bill to dedicate the Highway 52 bridge over County Road 42 in Rosemount in honor of Warrant Officer Dennis A. Groth was passed by the Legislature but was not signed into law because it was in the Supplemental Budget Omnibus bill vetoed by Governor Dayton. I am committed to getting this important bill to honor Warrant Officer Groth passed and signed into law in the 2019 Session.

Sincerely,

Simplifying & Reducing Taxes

It's been nearly two decades since Minnesotans have received meaningful tax relief. The 2017 Tax Relief bill delivered \$650 million in tax relief to Minnesota families in 2018-2019 and \$790 million in 2020-2021.



Nearly 284,000 senior citizen tax filers received tax reductions; 72,000 of those no longer pay state income tax on their social security benefits.



A family of four making \$50,000 a year received an additional \$1,200 toward their child care expenses.



65,000 students received an average of a \$414 reduction in their taxes through a new tax credit for student loan payments.

Following the passage of major tax reform by Congress in 2017, my colleagues and I passed legislation to simplify the filing process and deliver tax relief to Minnesotans. In addition to blocking Governor Dayton's \$1.4 billion tax increase proposal, my colleagues and I worked hard to:

- Ensure 99.8% of Minnesotans would not see a tax increase, with over 2.2 million benefiting from a tax cut.
- Help Minnesotans keep more of what they earn by cutting the first two income tax rates – the first tax rate cuts in almost two decades.
- Protect families by preserving both the state personal and dependent exemption as well as standard and itemized deductions.

Unfortunately, Governor Dayton vetoed our Tax Conformity bills, both the first bill and the second bill that had emergency school funding included. Passing a Tax Conformity bill into law will be my top priority in the 2019 Session.

Health Care Costs

In the 2017 Session, my colleagues and I worked quickly to lower costs and increase options for Minnesotans who have seen three years of double-digit premium increases and been restricted from seeing their doctors due to Obamacare.



Emergency Premium Aid & Access:

This reform provided a 25% rebate and ensured continued access to doctors for people receiving life-saving treatment.



Premium Security Plan: This nationally recognized program put a stop to double-digit premium increases, reducing premiums by 20% on average.



Rep. Wills with Rosemount Troop 207 Scouts at the Capitol.

Roads & Bridges

One of the top priorities of my colleagues and I over the past two years was to increase safety and reduce traffic congestion by fixing the roads and bridges Minnesotans use every day. The Legislature invested a historic level of existing funds into our transportation infrastructure without increasing the gas tax.



A more than \$300 million influx of funding for roads over two years, with an additional \$16 million for small cities' road projects.



97 bridges will be repaired or replaced statewide as a result of \$25 million in funds for a new local bridge account.

In the 2018 Session, my colleagues and I built off 2017's historic transportation investment by passing an additional \$57 million in funding for roads and bridges. Unfortunately, Governor Dayton vetoed this additional transportation funding.

Furthermore, the 2018 Bonding bill signed into law by Governor Dayton includes \$519 million for long-term transportation needs.

Education & Student Safety

The 2017 K-12 Education Budget contained more than \$1.3 billion of increased funding including a 2% yearly increase to the per-pupil formula that was requested by our school districts, with proven reforms.

We put student safety first during the 2018 Session by sending Governor Dayton more than \$50 million in funding to improve student safety – double the amount he proposed. The proposal would have given school districts the resources and flexibility necessary to meet their school safety needs. I was proud to chief author several school safety bills included in this proposal.

Also in 2018, legislators responded to calls from school district leaders facing emergency budget shortfalls due to declining enrollment and special needs funding issues with a proposal that would have made \$225 million available to schools.

Unfortunately, Governor Dayton vetoed all the emergency education funding and all but \$25 million in school safety funding.

NEW LAWS *with an Everyday Impact*



REAL ID - A REAL ID compliance law passed in 2017 enables Minnesotans to use a state-issued ID to board an airplane or enter a federal facility. The DMV will begin issuing REAL IDs in October 2018.



DWI Law - Minnesota's DWI law updated to criminalize driving while under the influence of an "intoxicating substance" and closes a loophole in DWI law. I was proud to be the chief author of this important legislation to make our roads safer.



Pensions - The Legislature unanimously passed a comprehensive Pension bill that provided significant reforms and stabilized our state's pension plans.