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**Minnesota
House of
Representatives**
Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Laws Effective Jan. 1, 2008

Editor's note: The following is a listing of selected new laws passed during the 2007 legislative session that take effect Jan. 1, 2008. The asterisk following the bill number denotes the language that became law. A complete summary of all laws passed by the 2007 Legislature is available online from House Public Information Services. Go to <http://www.house.mn/hinfo/newlaws2007-0.asp>.

BUSINESS

American flags must be USA made

American flags sold in the state must be manufactured in the United States, beginning Jan. 1, 2008.

Sponsored by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) and Sen. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm), the provision is included in the omnibus jobs and economic development and housing finance law, most of which took effect July 1, 2007.

When first introduced as a stand-alone bill, the selling of novelties and other items depicting the flag would have been prohibited. This provision was removed before the bill was considered and passed by the House.

HF122*/SF62/CH135

CONSUMERS

Car buyers' bill of rights established

The Car Buyers' Bill of Rights will lay out new consumer disclosure requirements for vehicle add-ons, and the effect of the add-on to monthly loan payments. The law also defines "certified" motor vehicle in an effort to eliminate improper use of the term.

Under the law, sponsored by Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) and Sen. Ron Latz (DFL-St. Louis Park), dealers must also disclose if a consumer credit report was used to complete the loan transaction, and provide a toll-free number for the consumer to obtain a copy of the report.

HF1675/SF1333*/CH99

INSURANCE

'Dependent' medical coverage extended, in some cases

Some insurers will be required to include medical coverage, under family plans, to unmarried children ages 19-24, regardless of whether they are full-time students. Previously, dependents under age 25 could be covered only if they were full-time students.

The provision is part of the omnibus health and human services finance law, sponsored by Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) and Sen. Linda Berglin (DFL-Mpls).

The new coverage definition applies only to insurance products that are under state regulation, and does not apply to self-insured health plans. According to the nonpartisan House Research department, more than half of the state's residents who get health coverage through an employer get it through self-insured plans the state cannot regulate.

HF1078*/SF967/CH147

SAFETY

Amusement ride inspections required

Amusement rides will be required to have annual and daily ride inspections, under a new law sponsored by Rep. Tim Faust (DFL-Mora) and Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville).

The law is in response to an incident in Faust's district where two girls fell out of an amusement ride due to operator error.

The law requires that amusement rides be inspected at least once annually by a certified inspector and before daily operation by the owner or operator of the ride. Additionally, ride operators or owners may impose and enforce safety rules regarding the riders' behavior.

HF1824/SF1370*/CH95

Mercury banned from cosmetics and other products

Several products sold in Minnesota must be mercury-free, beginning Jan. 1, 2008. This includes stoves, barometers, cooking thermometers, over-the-counter pharmaceutical products, cosmetics, toiletries and fragrances.

Additionally, products manufactured on or after Jan. 1, 2008, that contain mercury must adhere to a new labeling law that notifies consumers that products containing mercury must be disposed of properly.

These provisions are part of the law restricting the sale, use and disposal of products containing mercury, sponsored by Rep. Melissa Hortman (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville).

HF1316/SF1085*/CH109

New design required for school bus seats

School bus safety statutes will be modified Jan. 1, 2008.

For example, passenger seats must have a minimum cushion depth of 15 inches and a seat back height of at least 20 inches above the seating reference point.

The provision is part of the omnibus E-12 education finance law, sponsored by Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville).

HF2245*/SFnone/CH146