



Session Update

State Representative Melissa Hortman

July 6, 2005

A WAY OUT OF THE PARTIAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

WAYS I HAVE WORKED TO CONTRIBUTE TO A BUDGET SOLUTION:

1. With and several of my first-term colleagues, I have voluntarily given up any extra pay during the special session. We feel it's a way to lead by example.
2. I'm an author of the bill that would cut off all salary to legislators and the governor in the event of a shutdown. The budget negotiators should have a personal stake in the outcome.
3. I joined twelve other House members recently in presenting a list of budget options that would meet halfway between the Governor's position and the DFL Senate's position.
4. Several days ago, I joined nineteen other lawmakers from both parties in unveiling an even more detailed common sense budget compromise that would avoid a shutdown. This plan remains on the table and will likely serve as a roadmap for a final budget compromise.
5. I voted for five "lights on" bills so that we could have kept our government open and functioning while the budget deal is finalized. I'm very disappointed that this bill did not get enough votes to pass. I believe that a government shutdown is bad for everyone.

Dear Friend,

Along with many of you, I am very disappointed over the unnecessary partial government shutdown. I have spent the past several weeks, along with first-term members of both parties, trying very hard to avoid this result. Unfortunately, party leaders on both sides have been too reluctant to compromise. Still, I am a long-term optimist. I believe that we newer members bring skills to the table that are needed now—we are more conciliatory, more pragmatic, and more practical than some of those who have served for many years. The important bi-partisan successes of this session prove that we have already had a positive influence on the culture of the Legislature, despite the current impasse. My single focus right now is helping a budget deal to emerge as quickly as possible. I am committed to being part of the solution.

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HERE'S WHAT I BELIEVE SHOULD HAPPEN NEXT:

- ◆ The political posturing must end on both sides.
- ◆ It's time to move beyond the "blame game." Let's look forward, not backward.
- ◆ Legislators should pass a "lights on" bill so that we can keep our government running for a few extra days until the final deal is reached.
- ◆ The Legislature and the Governor should stay at the Capitol all day every day until a final budget deal emerges.
- ◆ Each party has to compromise for the common good.

As always, please feel free to contact me about any issue, idea, or concern. Thank you!

Sincerely, **Representative Melissa Hortman**