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New jobs in hard times
Lawmakers make job creation a priority for 2009

BY NICK BUSSE

When employees at St. Paul’s Minnesota WorkForce Center are working harder than usual, that means a lot of people aren’t working — and according to Site Manager Jim Schultz, the slumping economy is keeping them as busy as ever.

“[In terms of people coming in, we see the gamut from entry-level people that lack their GED or high school diploma as well as highly educated people with masters and even a few doctorate degrees],” Schultz said.

Schultz’s facility is one of 47 workforce centers across the state established by the Department of Employment and Economic Development as a way to help bolster the state’s labor market. The centers provide unemployed workers with free access to a variety of training opportunities and resources to help them find new jobs and expand their career options.

With the current economic recession deepening, the centers have had their work cut out for them. At the St. Paul location alone, Schultz said the number of visits to his facility jumped from 29,000 in 2007 to 37,000 in 2008 — an increase of nearly 30 percent. Demands for their services are so high, Schultz said, that they’ve had to institute new policies such as time limits on use of job-search computers in their resource center.

In fact, they’ve even had to take the unusual step of hiring a security guard, because, as Schultz put it, “To be honest … not having a job is very stressful to people, and sometimes we found people engaging in bad behavior.”

If the latest projected unemployment trends are any indication, the same story is playing out all over the state — and the situation is likely to get worse. Projections by DEED’s Labor Market Information Office indicate that as many as 260,000 Minnesotans are likely to be jobless by the end of 2009 — an unemployment rate of 8.7 percent.

This means that in addition to the 39,000 workers who lost their jobs last year, another 61,000 could be out of work before the end of this year. The situation is so bad that DEED officials are warning that the state’s unemployment insurance funds will be exhausted by Christmas, forcing the state to borrow from the federal government to cover workers’ unemployment benefits.

Awaiting help
A few miles down the road from the workforce center, lawmakers at the State Capitol are at work on a new plan to stem the tide of job losses and provide some relief to the state’s workforce.

HF1 and SF1, sponsored by House Majority Leader Tony Sertich (DFL-Chisholm) and Sen. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm), are intended to serve as the vehicle for Minnesota to accept its share of what could be a massive economic stimulus package from the federal government. There are no details on the package yet, or on how much Minnesota could receive, but President-elect Barack Obama has asked Congress for billions of dollars in funding for any number of infrastructure projects and other public works, with the goal of reinvigorating the economy and creating new jobs. Action is expected within the first few weeks of Obama’s presidency.

At a Jan. 12 press conference, House and Senate DFL leaders explained that the purpose of the session’s first bill is to signal the federal government that Minnesota is “ready, willing and able” to accept federal stimulus dollars.

“We feel it’s important to introduce this bill to first and foremost say, ‘Minnesota is ready to receive these funds, and we’re going to be spending them in the most appropriate way possible with projects that are ready to go right away,’” Sertich said, adding that legislators

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would seek to “maximize” the amount of federal resources provided to the state.

Sertich named a variety of different areas where he thought the funding might go, including transportation, health care, education and energy. He said House and Senate committees would likely hold hearings to ask state agencies what public works projects needed funding and how soon they could begin.

“We want to be going down a parallel track with them (the federal government) … so when that bill is signed on President Obama’s desk, and those resources come to Minnesota, we have already been actively working to develop a plan to get those resources out the door to stimulate Minnesota’s economy,” Sertich said.

Lawmakers might find that some of the work has already been done.

One example is in the area of renewable energy, where the Green Jobs Task Force, an entity created by the Legislature in 2008, has been working to develop an action plan that could fit right into planning on how to use the stimulus money.

Rep. Jeremy Kalin (DFL-North Branch), co-chair of the task force, said renewable energy and energy conservation projects are particularly worthwhile for government to invest in because of their cost-efficiency. He gives the example of retrofitting public buildings to make them more energy efficient — something that costs money up front but saves taxpayer money in the long run.

“In fact, every day that we don’t get more folks to work doing so, we’re actually seeing more dollars go out the window and up the smokestack,” Kalin said. He added that green jobs are a “win-win-win” situation that provides employment, save taxpayer dollars and increase energy independence.

Few other options

The plan’s reliance on federal assistance makes some Republicans skeptical. The whole reason the federal government can provide any assistance at all is that it has the ability to run budget deficits — a luxury that Minnesota’s own constitution doesn’t allow. Not everyone thinks it’s a good idea.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty has said that the U.S. government is effectively bankrupt, and should avoid digging itself further into debt. Similarly, House Minority Leader Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) said in a press conference last week that as an “old-time Republican,” he is concerned about the federal deficit and the “spendaholics” in Congress. He said he would like to see any jobs stimulus plan focus on private sector-based solutions.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), a member of the Green Jobs Task Force, said that although he supports spending money on the green economy and job creation in general, he is concerned about the federal government’s poor track record on managing taxpayer money. He points to the $700 billion Troubled Assets Relief Program — better known as the Wall Street bailout — as a recent example.

“After they spent $350 billion, they said, ‘Where’s the money? What is it doing?’ We have no knowledge if the people we gave it to are doing what we thought they would do,” Gunther said, adding that he sees no reason to believe that federal stimulus plans will be better managed in the future.

Gunther offered praise for the Dislocated Worker Program and other DEED job-training services, calling them “nation-leading,” and said legislators should take care not to divert funding away from them. He noted a strong workforce — filled with workers paying income taxes — is the best way to avoid budget deficits like the one the state faces now.

Tools for job-seekers

The Department of Employment and Economic Development provides a variety of programs and services to help people find jobs:

- Minnesota WorkForce Centers are free “one-stop shops” for job seekers, providing everything from workshops on resume-writing and interviewing to job fairs and access to computers;
- www.MinnesotaWorks.net is a free job-search Web site that allows job-seekers to post resumes and matches them with employers looking for workers;
- DEED’s Dislocated Worker Program helps employees who have been laid off return to the workforce as quickly as possible; and
- The Unemployment Insurance Program provides temporary assistance to workers who have lost employment through no fault of their own.

For more information on these and other programs and services, visit www.positivelyMinnesota.com or contact your local Minnesota WorkForce Center via 888-GET-JOBS 888-438-5627.

The session’s first bill is considered a signal to the federal government that Minnesota is ‘ready, willing and able’ to accept federal stimulus dollars.

Projected Job Growth/Losses in Minnesota

![Projected Job Growth/Losses in Minnesota](image)

Chart courtesy: Labor Market Information Office, Department of Employment and Economic Development

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**BONDING**

Better luck with bond sales

With an economic outlook that has legislators picking their brains for solutions, a slight silver lining appeared when the state had better luck selling bonds than it did last year.

The Minnesota Management and Budget Office sold $400 million worth of bonds in three competitive sales Jan. 13. The bond sale raises money for capital projects, including college classrooms, prisons and road projects.

Kathy Kardell, assistant commissioner with the office’s Treasury Division, told the House Capital Investment Finance Division Jan. 13 the sale would have normally occurred in October, but was deferred until now because of poor market conditions. The state received an interest rate of 3.5 percent, which would have been 5 percent in October.

With concerns over the recent closures of some high-profile banks, like Lehman Brothers, Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) asked, “What happens if one of these companies goes down?”

Kardell said she doesn’t think there’s any risk. Using Lehman Brothers as an example, she said the bonds they had were sold immediately to other investors. Merrill Lynch bought $325 million worth of the bonds sold this week.

— S. HEGMAN

**CRIME**

Prison population projections

More Minnesotans are expected to live behind bars in the next decade, but the rate of the population increase is expected to slow.

Speaking before the House Public Safety Policy and Oversight Committee Jan. 13, Grant Duwe said the projected offender increase is expected to be 2,064 prisoners between July 1, 2008, and July 1, 2018. Duwe, the Corrections Department research and evaluation manager, said the prisoner increase in the previous eight years was 2,948.

That would put the state’s prison population at 11,288 on July 1, 2018, compared to 9,224 on July 1, 2008. Eight years earlier the number was 6,276.

“This is based on current trends, laws and practices,” he said. “Annual forecasts over the past three years have been very accurate as the average monthly error rate has been 0.4 percent.”

He said part of the rapid increase earlier this decade, and slower projected growth is related to methamphetamine convictions, which are on the decline.

There were less than “a few hundred” meth offenders in state prison at the start of this decade, he said. In 2006, there were 1,138 prisoners, but about 200 less since then.

Drug offenders are expected to account for much of the short-term growth, but about one-third of the long-term growth. Sex and other person offenders are expected to account for almost half of the growth in the next decade.

Rep. Paul Kohls (R-Victoria) wondered if there is enough room to house more prisoners.

“We do not anticipate bonding for additional male beds until the bonding session of 2014, and we do not anticipate bonding for additional female beds until well past the end of this chart,” said David Crist, assistant commissioner for the department’s Facility Services Division. The chart went until 2018.

— M. COOK

**EDUCATION**

Reviewing the syllabus

The House K-12 Education Policy and Oversight Committee began laying out specific topics for this session at its first meeting on Jan. 13.

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul), the committee chairman, said issues they’ll wrestle with throughout the session include oversight and quality of charter schools; the achievement gap between different races; the “accountability framework,” including the role of high-stakes testing such as the Graduation Required Assessments for Diploma math test for 11th graders; and teacher professional development.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), who leads the Charter Schools Working Group, said that although some charters have failed, the charter school model is valuable as “a laboratory as opposed to a direct competitor” of the mainstream school.

An Office of the Legislative Auditor June 2008 evaluation pinpoints charter schools’ problems with oversight and governance. These include inconsistent standards and lack of financial training for charter sponsors, conflicts of interest such as the requirement that charters have teacher-majority boards and lease aid. Mariani said an upcoming bill would likely incorporate the auditor’s recommendations.

Assessing student achievement remains problematic. A huge issue concerning school districts statewide is whether most juniors will pass the math portion of the GRAD test. A passing score is required to graduate.

The test is aligned to the 2003 Department of Education math standards, but only 34 percent of 11th graders passed a similar test last year. Rep. Denise Dittrich (DFL-Champlin) said that a workable solution could be for Education Commissioner Alice Seagren to determine a score for “partially meets proficiency” standards. The Legislature could also pass a law requiring students who do not at least partially meet proficiency to do remedial work and retest, but allow them to graduate if they meet all other local and state graduation requirements.

“Districts are very anxious to have some sort of resolution as to how we are going to proceed with this high-stakes test,” Dittrich said.

— K. BERGGREN

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**Editor’s note:** The following Highlights are coverage of select bills heard in House committees and other House activities held Jan. 8-15. Designations used in Highlight summaries: HF-House File; SF-Senate File; Ch-Chapter; and “- the bill version considered by the House or the bill language signed by the governor.
Extending unemployed benefits

Approximately 3,000 of the state’s unemployed could soon be eligible for an extension of their unemployment benefits.

Sponsored by Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul), HF4 would change the way the state computes the unemployment compensation eligibility period.

The bill is being fast-tracked to the House floor.

In less than an hour on Jan. 13, the bill was approved by the House Labor and Consumer Protection Division and the House Commerce and Labor Committee, On Jan. 15, it was approved by the House Bioscience and Workforce Development Policy and Oversight Division and the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance and Policy Division. It awaits action by the House Finance Committee.

The bill’s companion, SF4, sponsored by Senate President James Metzen (DFL-South St. Paul), was passed 65-0 on Jan. 15.

Lee Nelson, chief attorney for the Department of Employment and Economic Development, said the method the state uses to compute eligibility has made about 10 percent of those who could qualify for the federal extension enacted in July ineligible for the benefit.

“The people have worked long enough to qualify, but the dates by which the state uses are a problem for qualification,” he said.

With unemployment in the state expected to rise in the coming months, the department has calculated that an additional 150 Minnesotans would qualify for the extension each week.

More job losses predicted

Minnesota will likely shed an additional 61,000 jobs by the end of this year, and might not see any employment gains until early 2010, a state official said.

Steve Hine, labor market information director at the Department of Employment and Economic Development, said the grim prediction Jan. 13 to members of the House Bioscience and Workforce Development Policy and Oversight Division. No action was taken.

Hine said the projected net loss for this year would come on top of the approximately 39,000 jobs lost last year.

The projections are based on national economic trends predicted by Global Insight, a widely cited economic forecasting company, he said. Global Insight predicts an economic rebound in early 2010 — although, as Hine noted, it took Minnesota more than four years to regain the number of jobs it lost during the last recession, in 2001.

Among the other bad news, Hine said the state is likely to reach all-time highs in its total number of unemployed workers — as many as 260,000 by the end of 2009 — as well as the number of workers claiming and receiving unemployment benefits.

As if all that weren’t bad enough, he said Minnesota’s employment rate has also been lagging behind the national average in recent years.

“There’s a lot of speculation as to whether we’ve lost our luster here,” Hine said, noting that the state’s labor market, prior to 2006, had historically performed as good as or better than the United States as a whole.

Hine said the downturn in the housing market likely plays a role in Minnesota’s below-average employment rates. In particular, the state’s forest products manufacturing industry has been negatively impacted.

Division Chairman Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) said members of the division have their work cut out for them.

“We’re not growing the way we need to grow to keep the state healthy,” he said.

Division members also learned that the state faces the long-term challenges of an aging workforce, possible labor shortages and — despite an influx of immigrants — much slower growth in the state’s labor force.

Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud), the division’s lead Republican, said the projected long-term trends are particularly troubling.

“If these numbers are reflective of what’s going to happen even with the immigration we’re expecting, we’re in a world of hurt.”

Focus on foreclosures

In an era of banking and automotive industry federal bailouts, House Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division members heard about ways that federal and state funds are being distributed to Minnesotans whose homes are at risk of foreclosure.

Tonja Orr, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency assistant commissioner, said the agency has seen a 35 percent increase in foreclosures between 2007 and 2008. That’s 28,000 more families displaced. Orr also said that homeowners and renters are waiting until they are delinquent 120 days or more before seeking help, and that more emphasis is being placed on getting people help before the sheriff comes knocking at the door.

There are several ways the agency is attempting to expedite needed counseling and financial assistance:

• educational housing fairs, conference calls for people who cannot apply in person or who wish to be discreet, flyers in city utility bills and multi-lingual counseling;
• $9 million is available for help with down payments; and
• $1 million is available for a combined rehabilitation and down payment loan program.

Rep. Dan Severson (R-Sauk Rapids) said the process, as a whole, may create a false sense of security. Communities were encouraged to provide subsidized housing and people were “pushed” into those homes, Severson said. With a downturn in the economy, their ability to make mortgage payments diminished.

“So you have the taxpayer paying on the front end to get people into subsidized housing. When it comes off the market, now you’re asking for more money to fix up the
house so we can present it to new people who, in fact, may be questionable as to whether they can meet the challenge,” he said.

What the committee needs to address, according to Severson, is how to create a system that creates a long-term solution.

Committee Chairwoman Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) advised members that a Housing Caucus, which includes bipartisan participants from both the House and the Senate, is expected to reconvene this session, although an initial meeting date has not yet been scheduled.

— S. HEGARTY

**HUMAN SERVICES**

**Vets Home problems surface in audit**

Inadequate financial controls at the Minnesota Veterans Home - Minneapolis resulted in accounting inadequacies over resident trust accounts and payroll and administrative expenditures.

These were among the 18 findings of a July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2007, audit of the home, conducted by the Office of the Legislative Auditor and released Nov. 26, 2008. It was discussed during the House Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Finance Division meeting Jan. 13.

“This is a very serious report and one we will watch over carefully as the oversight committee,” said Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar), chairman of the division.

The home came under intense scrutiny after reports of inadequate patient care and facility and management concerns began to surface in 2002. The home’s oversight body, the Veterans Home Board, was dissolved in 2007 upon recommendation from the governor-appointed long-term care commission. Oversight was then moved to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Commissioner Clark Dyrud tried to assure division members that care for the more than 300 patients is not being compromised, and that this report is not a reflection of the management of the state’s four other veterans homes.

While many of the problems precede his oversight, Dyrud said he requested the audit as a baseline, but was surprised by the “depth of the problem.” He said that many of the findings are being addressed.

Among the findings, the audit states the home did not fulfill its management responsibilities to control its financial activities and ensure that transactions complied with state requirements and internal policies.

Further, it did not adequately restrict employee access to accounting systems or manage employee overtime costs. Nor did the home’s pharmacy adequately manage its non-controlled prescription drugs and other supplies.

While several division members requested another audit in the near-term, auditors said they would need at least a year or more of data to draw conclusions. It was suggested that Dyrud provide the division with quarterly updates.

— L. SCHUTZ

**Short-term coverage for unemployed**

Increasing unemployment numbers are translating to more people losing their health care coverage.

Rep. Paul Thissen (DFL-Mpls) sponsors
HF42 that would provide immediate short-term health insurance coverage for some qualified unemployed people.

“My goal here is to have a real discussion and come up with a solution to give Minnesota families relief in an easy and unbureaucratic way,” he told the House Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight Committee, which he chairs, on Jan. 13.

The bill would provide qualifying individuals receiving unemployment benefits, and their family members, up to six months of MinnesotaCare coverage, while exempting them from premiums and eligibility requirements. There is no Senate companion.

Those who become unemployed in many cases are eligible for COBRA health insurance, but Thissen said that the cost sometimes eats about 70 percent of the person’s unemployment benefit, making the insurance unaffordable.

Because Thissen recognized the bill as a “work in progress” needing further discussion, the committee laid the bill over.

Rep. Tom Emmer (R-Delano) praised the idea behind the bill, but is hopeful that a private health care option, such as a voucher or subsidy, can be found rather than moving people onto a government program.

Rep. Steve Gottwalt (R-St. Cloud) noted the unpredictability of the length of time a person may be unemployed “It would be nice to preserve private options for them rather than put them into another government program that ends up cost-shifting the costs to the private sector.”

— L. SCUTZ

Local government fraud rises

State Auditor Rebecca Otto said her office saw an uptick in financial fraud cases involving local government officials last year and warned that the economic downturn might spur even more cases.

Otto told members of the House State Government Finance Division on Jan. 13 that 64 cases of suspected misuse of taxpayer funds were reported to her office last year — up from 39 in 2007.

“There was approximately a 64 percent increase in the number of reports,” Otto said, but tempered that statistic by noting that it accounted for only a small fraction of the state’s approximately 4,300 units of local government.

“That’s the good news — there is a lot of good work going on in local governments around the state. But there are still some problems,” she said.

Otto said the state’s slumping economy will put additional pressures on local government employees’ personal finances that might serve as a temptation to commit fraud. She said gambling addictions and gambling debts among local officials are often a factor in such cases, as are health care expenses or the loss of a spouse’s job.

Nancy Bode, assistant legal counsel for the office, presented division members with several case studies.

She described how the Koochiching Economic Development Authority — a two-person agency — put one employee in charge of its entire financial operation, allowing her to write more than $334,000 in unauthorized checks to herself over a period of five years without anyone noticing.

In another example, Bode said a bookkeeper for a school district in northwest Minnesota managed to steal nearly $119,000 in public funds by taking cash out of deposits and replacing the money with checks for which there were no receipts — a scheme known as “lapping.”

Otto said that in most cases, the fraud or abuse occurred because of easily solvable problems, such as local governments putting too much control in the hands of one person rather than dividing important job duties. She said local governments need to implement strong internal controls that deny employees the opportunity to commit fraud, and that also prevent local governments from falling victim to financial scams from outside the organization.

— N. BUSSE

TAXES

Extra sales tax spending plans

Preserving the state’s cultural and outdoor heritage meant enough to a majority of state voters that they voted for a change in the state’s constitution.

“We have to determine the legislation that will make that work,” said Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), chairwoman of the House Cultural and Outdoor Resources Finance Division. “This is a big, big responsibility and none of it is just automatic. We are in charge of listening and finding out what the people were saying when they voted ‘yes’ and what their expectations are.”

The constitutional amendment, which garnered 56 percent of the vote in November, will go into effect July 1, 2009, and increase the state’s sales tax from 6.5 percent to 6.875 percent. The extra money collected will be divided with 33 percent allocated to the Outdoor Heritage Fund, and to the three newly created funds the allocations are as follows:

• 33 percent to the Clean Water Fund, with at least 5 percent for clean drinking water;
• 19.75 percent to the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund; and
• 14.25 percent to the Parks and Trails Fund.

Representatives from several arts, outdoors and cultural groups pleaded their cases for funding consideration during the division’s first meeting Jan. 12. These included the Science Museum of Minnesota, the Minnesota Children’s Museum and the Minnesota Farmers Union.

Murphy said the division will get a lot of background on issues and as much scientific data as possible to make informed decisions on how to make the amendment work over the next 25 years. The extra sales tax is in effect until 2034.

“This is our kids’ money. This is our grandkids’ money,” Murphy said. “That is our legacy.”

Murphy also said she chose to have the division’s meeting as the last one on Mondays so no one would be in a rush to leave for other meetings.

“That means we can be here from 4:30 to 8:30 or 4:30 to 10:30,” she said.

One committee member asked if she would pay for pizza for any late meetings.

In response she said, “You might want to pack a sandwich.”

— S. HEGMAN

Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg, a member of the Minnesota National Guard Red Bulls, is recognized during the Jan. 15 State of the State address.

PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

SOLDIER RECOGNIZED
The state of our state
Tax cuts, wage freezes on governor’s list to help budget

BY SONJA HEGMAN

With a nearly $5 billion projected deficit facing the state, Gov. Tim Pawlenty urged bipartisan teamwork and proposed tax cuts and credits to businesses to stimulate job creation in the state’s lackluster economy.

“We face brand new challenges in a rapidly changing world,” Pawlenty said in his State of the State address Jan 15. “The old ways aren’t going to cut it anymore.”

As a way to “jump start” job creation, the governor outlined his proposed Minnesota Jobs Recovery Act that would:
- cut the state’s business tax rate in half, from 9.8 percent to 4.8 percent, over the next six years;
- provide a $50 million package of tax credits that would create more than $100 million in new investments;
- provide a 25 percent refundable tax credit for small business owners who reinvest in their business quickly to stimulate the economy;
- provide a capital gains exemption for qualifying investments in small businesses; and
- provide businesses with a 100 percent exemption from the sales tax immediately upon the purchase of equipment, instead of filing paperwork for a refund.

“These tax cuts and incentives may seem aggressive in the context of our budget challenges,” Pawlenty said. “But we simply have to take dramatic measures to improve our job climate and kick-start job growth in Minnesota.”

With an image of a mom and dad sitting at their kitchen table fretting over “a budget that’s tighter than it’s ever been,” Pawlenty asked legislators to bring the same emotions and concerns faced by everyday Minnesotans to the Capitol. “We need to start by taking the kitchen table approach and setting priorities.”

Among other things, the governor wants to change the way government does business so it is not “to the detriment of taxpayers.” For example, he said the state’s 87 counties duplicate services 87 times.

“I’m not proposing to eliminate counties,” he said. “But I am proposing that we save money by encouraging counties to work together.”

He also suggests that counties be given incentives to create no more than 15 new regional enterprises that “will manage and run all human service programs so each county doesn’t have to run their own.”

Pawlenty said an ongoing top state priority must be to “dramatically reform and improve our K-12 education system.” He vowed his biennial budget, to be released Jan. 27, would contain ways to do that.

In addition to having minimum entrance requirements for teacher preparation programs and modernizing the way teachers are paid, Pawlenty suggests paying school districts based on results.

“I propose we increase school district funding by up to an additional 2 percent per student for students meeting standards or at least showing reasonable growth towards achievement,” he said. “This will align the money we spend with the results we expect. It’s common sense.”

Pawlenty said the state must get health and human services costs under control; otherwise, the ability to fund other priority areas could be eliminated. The budget forecast shows these programs will rise nearly 19 percent if left unchecked.

“As my budget will reflect, there is no easy way to do this. But, in the midst of these changes, we will protect all current health care eligibility for children,” he said.

Other items proposed by the governor include:
- creating tax-free Green Job Opportunity Building Zones (JOBZ) for renewable energy jobs created anywhere in the state;
- requiring the Minnesota State College and Universities system to deliver 25 percent of credits online by 2015;
- imposing a firm cap on tuition increases; and
- instituting a two-year wage freeze for state government employees and entities that accept state money.

“The state of our state is challenged, but overcoming challenges is what Minnesota does best,” he said.

Some DFLers, including House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls), were left wondering about Pawlenty’s logic behind increased spending. She said his proposals would push the state’s projected budget deficit north of $6 billion.

“When we were looking to the governor to make concrete solutions as to how we’re going to solve this very massive problem together, the governor’s answer will actually make the problem worse for Minnesotans.”
— Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher Speaker of the House
Not enough money in the cookie jar
Spending to outpace revenues as state’s population ages, report finds

By Sonja Hegman

Baby boomers are expected to suck the state dry if current budget problems prevail, because more money will be spent for their health care — and living on fixed incomes, they will no longer provide the tax revenues they once did.

The State Budget Trends Study Commission presented this and other findings to a joint meeting of the House Taxes and Finance committees Jan. 13.

Health care is growing at a rate of 8.5 percent per year. State revenues are expected to grow at an annual rate of 3.9 percent over the next 25 years.

“Nothing in this report is going to solve the current problem,” said Jay Kiedrowski, commission co-chair. “We’re going to be facing this three or four years from now unless we plant corn seeds today.”

From 2005 to 2015, the state’s fastest growing population is those ages 55 to 69. Next to health care, education is the second highest cost to the state moving forward.

“If we had a balanced budget this biennium, we still have expenditures exceeding revenue, so we would have a problem in the next biennium as well,” said former Human Services Commissioner Kevin Goodno, also a commission co-chair.

But nothing will stop the fact that people are living longer and will be more of a burden on the state’s health care system, he said. Starting at age 65, all residents are eligible for Medicare whether they are working or not, said Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth).

“What do you do about health care costs?” Goodno asked. “One of the biggest challenges is restrictions from the federal government. We know there are better solutions than this. We’d welcome any solutions you’d like to recommend.”

The 15-member commission was established in the 2007 omnibus state government finance law and held 14 meetings beginning in the fall of 2007. “When I introduced this bill (to form the commission), there was no deficit,” said Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington), chairwoman of the House Taxes Committee.

“They came together to give us information for the long-term.”

Financial recommendations were reviewed from various studies completed over a 30-year period, and the commission heard presentations from many state officials with backgrounds in demography, education, health care, finance and economics.

Findings of the commission include:
• Minnesota has become more diverse in recent years and this will continue as economic growth depends on drawing new workers to the state;
• public spending priorities will need to shift as the state’s economically dependent population grows larger and relies more heavily on fewer workers;
• Minnesota has a long-term structural budget problem, with long-term expenditure growth likely to outpace revenue growth;
• Minnesota’s statutory budget reserve ceiling has not grown to an appropriate level to adequately manage the underlying risks to the state’s tax system over time; and
• Minnesota needs a cash flow reserve account of sufficient size so the state can avoid short-term external borrowing during a biennium.

House Finance Committee Chairman Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) said there’s been a debate on how to deal with the state’s reserve fund over the years. “What should be counted as a reserve from our perspective?” Goodno said the commission didn’t get into that level of detail, but “you want to make

The reality is that these recommendations don’t mean anything unless you follow through. You have the ability to change those statutes. It’s up to you to decide if there’s a will to do that.”
— Kevin Goodno
State Budget Trends Study Commission co-chair

Budget trends continued on page 23
The office’s Financial Audit Division issued 36 state agency, board or department audits in 2008. Among the common findings were a few problem areas of basic controls, including:

• incompatible duties;
• safeguarding receipts;
• insufficient documentation;
• poor monitoring of employees’ use of a state-issued cell phone;
• reimbursing travel expenses for ineligible meals or things that lacked sufficient support; and
• lack of monitoring when exceptions to normal timesheet recording occurred.

“Well what we’re trying to do is not just disclose problems, not just have findings, but we’re trying to work our way toward good government that has a reputation for very strong integrity and good financial management,” Legislative Auditor Jim Nobles told the House Finance Committee Jan. 12. “I think we’ve hit a lapse in that, that we have an opportunity to now correct, and we ought to correct very quickly.”

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal), the committee chairman, said individual audits are likely to get a closer look by the appropriate House committees.

Cecile Ferkul, deputy legislative auditor with the audit division, said incompatible duties include ensuring one person doesn’t handle a financial transaction from beginning to end. She said this has to do with the amount of access one person may have to an accounting system.

“It also creates an environment where fraud could occur. … You’d want to separate as a way to ensure errors are detected and that the opportunity for fraud is diminished.”

Ferkul noted the Board of Barber and Cosmetologist Examiners had poor separation of duties for custody of cash and could not account for about $10,000 when comparing revenues to licenses issued. “It is likely it was a fraud on the part of one of their employees,” she said.

Any misuse of state funds must be reported to the Office of the Attorney General, which can then try to recover funds informally or by legal action. County attorneys are responsible for criminal prosecution, which the office encourages when appropriate.

“A concern was raised as to how the Combative Sports Commission collected license or event fees at a fight. “They told us it goes in someone’s pocket and gets brought to the office on Monday,” Ferkul said. “That’s not the way a state agency should be run, whether it’s two people or 100 people or 5,000 people.”

During the post-Interstate 35W bridge collapse investigation into the activities of Sonia Pitt, the former director of the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management at the Department of Transportation, it was discovered that more than 65 percent of the calls on her state-issued cell phone from February through December 2007 were personal. Yet, she is likely not the only state employee who has abused their device.

Federal law says personal use is a benefit to a state employee and should be taxed. “We found pretty much across-the-board that no state agency is monitoring cell phone use in accordance with the IRS regulations,” Ferkul said, noting the IRS has increased enforcement. She said the University of California-Los Angeles was fined $250,000 for non-compliance.

As for travel, the lack of oversight allowed an inspector with the Department of Labor and Industry to make an extra $10,000 by routinely overstating his mileage claims.

In about one-third of the audits, needed documentation was missing, including one agency that had no record for about $70,000 worth of purchase card transactions done by their employees. “Being able to provide evidence for the state’s financial activity, we feel, is a very important responsibility of state government,” Ferkul said.

**Reaction**

Because of time constraints and resources, it can sometimes take years for an auditor to follow up with an agency to see if improvements were made. Nobles would like to see Minnesota Management and Budget emphasize these findings as preventative measures.

“We don’t want an agency to say, ‘That was a problem with Bill, and we talked to Bill about it and he doesn’t do that anymore,’” Nobles said. “We see sometimes these problems as indicative of broader problems that need to be addressed.”

Deputy Commissioner Stephanie Andrews vowed that Minnesota Management and Budget, formerly the Department of Finance, will continue working with agencies, although it might change how it trains agency employees.

Audit Reports continued on page 23
Passing the torch of democracy
Youth immerse themselves in lingo and actions of lawmaking

By Kris Berggren

Jeff Boigenzahn II has served as a Senate committee chair, House chaplain and now a lobbyist.

Clad in a dark suit and necktie, sporting Capitol credentials around his neck, he waited outside a State Office Building hearing room Jan. 9 to testify before the Forest, Wetland and Wildlife Committee.

Inside the room, Sen. Fadumo Mohamud, in a pink hijab and wearing large hoop earrings, read her bill, HF6210, which would reduce light pollution by limiting rooftop lighting in urban areas. After testimony from lobbyists and questions from members, the committee chair called the vote. Mohamud’s bill was approved.

Those names don’t ring a bell? That’s because Boigenzahn, a senior at Red Wing High School, and Mohamud, a student at Lincoln International High School in Minneapolis, are two of the students who took part in the YMCA’s annual Youth in Government Model Assembly. As the House recessed Jan. 8-11 expressly for the purpose, 1,400 students representing high schools and YMCA branches around the state gathered at the Capitol Complex to try on the roles of the real Legislature.

The first model legislature was organized by a New York state YMCA in 1936. Minnesota’s program began a decade later. Its motto: “Democracy must be learned by each generation.”

The career of “proud alum” Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) could be an indication Youth in Government is indeed helping to pass the torch of democracy. Simon’s nameplate is now affixed to Desk 103 in the House Chamber, but he easily recalls the thrill of sitting at a similar desk for the first time as a teenager.

“That opportunity to be here and immerse yourself for a few days in the physical trappings of state government was exciting,” Simon said.

The program’s high standards, including the chance to meet legislators, a formal dress code and the etiquette of parliamentary procedure helped him and his peers “get into character” and “made the possibility real to me of someday being in public office.”

The assembly is nonpartisan, though participants say their peers from all parts of the state bring a diversity of opinion. Students follow official legislative process to the letter and YMCA branches around the state gathered at the Capitol Complex to try on the roles of the real Legislature.

Gov. Logan Dick, a Hopkins High School senior with the Ridgedale YMCA delegation, said Model Assembly bills often reflect issues in the news. She and Lt Gov. Jacob Peters campaigned last year on a platform that sounds a bit like a physics formula, $E^2 + T^2$, which stands for “Energy, Education, Technology, Transportation.” Last year, she said students introduced a number of bills about bridges and safety regulations. This year’s slate included energy and economic bailout concerns.

Many students are clearly riding a wave of optimism created by the campaign of President-elect Barack Obama. Boigenzahn and his colleagues, Henry Sibley High School juniors Matt Zekowski and Adi Paradise, chatted about their political inspirations.

“Barack Obama to me is the American dream,” Boigenzahn said. “Often we ask ourselves what is the American dream: To rise from nothing to everything.”

“To serve the people,” interjected Paradise.

“He wasn’t even elected yet and he was already bringing people together,” Boigenzahn continued.

Students mostly downplayed any political ambitions, though many intend to study...
Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs
445 State Office Building .......... 296-3201
Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:45 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 11
Chair: Otremba-DFL
Vice Chair: Doty-DFL
Republican Lead: Hamilton-R
Drazkowski-R Morrow-DFL
Eken-DFL Olin-DFL
Faust-DFL Shimanski-R
Kath-DFL Urdahl-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Andrew “AJ” Duerr .................... 296-9468
Committee Legislative Assistant
Mary Larson ................. 296-5486

Veterans Affairs Division
439 State Office Building .......... 296-4346
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in the Basement Hearing Room *

Members: 10
Chair: Koenen-DFL
Vice Chair: Newton-DFL
Republican Lead: Dettmer-R
Doty-DFL Otremba-DFL
Faust-DFL Sanders-R
Lieder-DFL Severson-R
Magnus-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Christine Murphy ................. 296-5491
Committee Legislative Assistant
Mary Larson .................. 296-5486

Civil Justice
367 State Office Building .......... 296-4262
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 14
Chair: Mullery-DFL
Vice Chair: Jackson-DFL
Republican Lead: Drazkowski-R
Champion-DFL Mahoney-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL Olin-DFL
Holberg-R Paymar-DFL
Hortman-DFL Scott-R
Johnson-DFL Westrom-R
Kelly-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Patrick Baldwin ................. 296-4283
Committee Legislative Assistant
Vickie Benson ............... 296-5526

Commerce and Labor
503 State Office Building .......... 296-4192
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. in the Basement Hearing Room *

Members: 18
Chair: Atkins-DFL
Vice Chair: Lillie-DFL
Republican Lead: Zellers-R
Anderson, S.-R Knuth-DFL
Anzelc-DFL Mullery-DFL
Davids-R Murdock-R
Davnie-DFL Sanders-R
Fritz-DFL Simon-DFL
Hoppe-R Slocum-DFL
Hosch-DFL Thao-DFL
Johnson-DFL

Labor and Consumer Protection Division
545 State Office Building .......... 296-0173
Meets: Fridays at 10:30 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 11
Chair: Davnie-DFL
Vice Chair: Fritz-DFL
Republican Lead: Murdock-R
Lillie-DFL Simon-DFL
Mack-R Solberg-DFL
Mahoney-DFL Zellers-R
Nelson-DFL Atkins-DFL
Sanders-R **ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Christine Murphy ................. 296-5491
Committee Legislative Assistant
Mary Faust .................. 296-4321

Telecommunications Regulation and Infrastructure Division
549 State Office Building .......... 296-4201
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 11
Chair: Johnson-DFL
Vice Chair: Masin-DFL
Republican Lead: Hoppe-R
Beard-R Kiffmeyer-R
Brown-DFL Lillie-DFL
Doepke-R Sailer-DFL
Gardner-DFL Atkins-DFL
Juhnke-DFL **ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
John Reich ............... 296-7175
Committee Legislative Assistant
Mary Faust .................. 296-4321

This list is subject to change.

**Non-voting member
Member Assignments as of 1/14/09 *Rooms in State Office Building
All area codes are 651
**Environment Policy and Oversight**

575 State Office Building ............. 296-9918
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.
in Room 5*

**Members:** 18
Chair: Eken-DFL
Vice Chair: Gardner-DFL

**Republican Lead:** McNamara-R
Anderson, P.-R Loon-R
Cornish-R Paymar-DFL
Dill-DFL Persell-DFL
Drazkowski-R Sailer-DFL
Falk-DFL Thissen-DVL
Hackbarth-R Thissen-DVL
Hansen-DFL Wagenius-DVL
Juhnke-DVL

**Staff**
Committee Administrator
Kirk Koudelka ...................... 296-6937
Committee Legislative Assistant
Diogo Reis ....................... 296-3889

**Game, Fish and Forestry Division**

571 State Office Building ............. 296-2190
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. in the Basement Hearing Room*

**Members:** 11
Chair: Dill-DFL
Vice Chair: Sailer-DFL

**Republican Lead:** Cornish-R
Falk-DFL Murdock-R
Hackbarth-R Persell-DFL
Hansen-DFL Thao-DFL
McNamara-R Thissen-DVL

**Staff**
Committee Administrator
Kirk Koudelka ...................... 296-6937
Committee Legislative Assistant
Diogo Reis ....................... 296-3889

**Ethics**

343 State Office Building ............. 296-2676
Meet: At the call of the chair in (No Room Assigned)*

**Members:** 4
Chair: Murphy, M.-DFL
Vice Chair: Smith-R

Holberg-R (A)Liebling-DFL
Simon-DFL (A)Shimanski-R

(A)-Alternate
Staff
Committee Legislative Assistant
Phil Chen ......................... 296-5360

**Finance**

479 State Office Building ............. 296-4255
Meets: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. or call of the chair in Room 200*

**Members:** 33
Chair: Carlson-DFL
Vice Chair: Benson-DFL

Brod-R Lenczewski-DFL
Champion-DFL Murphy, M.-DFL
Clark-DFL Paymar-DFL
Emmer-R Pelowski-DFL
Garofalo-R Peppin-R
Greiling-DFL Rukavina-DFL
Hackbarth-R Shimanski-R
Hauserman-DFL Simon-DFL
Hilty-DFL Slawik-DFL
Howes-R Smith-R
Huntley-DFL Solberg-DFL
Juhnke-DFL Thissen-DVL
Kahn-DFL Wagenius-DVL
Kiffmeyer-R Winkler-DFL
Knut-DVL Seifert-R
Kohls-R

*ex-officio**

**Staff**
Committee Administrator
Joanna Dornfeld ................. 296-9302
Committee Legislative Assistant
Lill Pohlkamp ....................... 296-9552

**Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Finance Division**

485 State Office Building ............. 296-6206
Meets: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
in the Basement Hearing Room*

**Members:** 14
Chair: Juhnke-DVL
Vice Chair: Hamilton-R

**Republican Lead:** Magnus-R
Anderson, P.-R Shimanski-R
Brown-DFL Torkelson-R
Doy-DVL Welti-DFL
Eken-DFL Carlson-DFL
Falk-DFL *ex-officio**
Faust-DFL Solberg-DFL
Hosch-DFL *ex-officio**
Otrema-DVL

**Staff**
Committee Administrator
Andrew “AJ” Duerr ................. 296-9468
Committee Legislative Assistant
Will Hailer ....................... 296-5992

**Capital Investment Finance Division**

453 State Office Building ............. 296-3824
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m.
in the Basement Hearing Room*

**Members:** 22
Chair: Hausman-DFL
Vice Chair: Scalze-DFL

**Republican Lead:** Howes-R
Anderson, B.-R Mahoney-DFL
Carlson-DFL Mullery-DFL
Clark-DFL Murphy, M.-DFL
Davids-R Pelowski-DFL
Dean-R Rukavina-DFL
Eastlund-R Scott-R
Hansen-DFL Solberg-DFL
Juhnke-DFL Urda-R
Lanning-R Wagenius-DVL
Lieder-DVL

**Staff**
Committee Administrator
Jenny Nash ................. 296-4122
Committee Legislative Assistant
Laurie Nistl ....................... 296-5497

**Cultural and Outdoor Resources Finance Division**

343 State Office Building ............. 296-2676
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 5*

**Members:** 14
Chair: Murphy, M.-DFL
Vice Chair: Morgan-DFL

**Republican Lead:** Davids-R
Brown-DFL Wagenius-DVL
Eken-DFL Carlson-DFL
Hauserman-DFL *ex-officio**
Haws-DFL Hansen-DFL
Howes-R *ex-officio**
Lillie-DFL Kahn-DFL
Loeffler-DFL *ex-officio**
Mack-R Solberg-DFL
Torkelson-R *ex-officio**
Urdahl-R

**Staff**
Committee Administrator
Kerry Kinney Fine .......... 296-7427
Committee Legislative Assistant
Phil Chen ....................... 296-5360

**Non-voting member**
Member Assignments as of 1/14/09
*Rooms in State Office Building
All area codes are 651

January 16, 2009
Early Childhood Finance and Policy Division
403 State Office Building .............296-7807
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.
in Room 200*

Members: 14
Chair: Slawik-DFL
Vice Chair: Rosenthal-DFL
Republican Lead: Downey-R
Bly-DFL  Nornes-R
Buesgens-R  Peterson, S.-DFL
Greiling-DFL  Ward-DFL
Hamilton-R  Carlson-DFL
Jackson-DFL  ex-officio**
Laine-DFL  Solberg-DFL
Mack-R  ex-officio**
Mariani-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Sara Benzkofer ..................296-4305
Committee Legislative Assistant
Matthew Collie ..................296-4483

Energy Finance and Policy Division
559 State Office Building .............296-4308
Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:45 p.m.
in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 21
Chair: Hilty-DFL
Vice Chair: Falk-DFL
Republican Lead: Westrom-R
Anderson, B.-R  Knuth-DFL
Atkins-DFL  Magnus-R
Beard-R  Nornes-R
Bly-DFL  Obermueller-DFL
Brynaert-DFL  Persell-DFL
Gunter-R  Sailer-DFL
Hackbarth-R  Welti-DFL
Hoppe-R  Carlson-DFL
Jackson-DFL  ex-officio**
Johnson-DFL  Solberg-DFL
Kalin-DFL  ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Andy Pomroy ..................296-4180
Committee Legislative Assistant
Rebekah Smith ..................296-8879

Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division
449 State Office Building .............296-4200
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.
in Room 5*

Members: 17
Chair: Wagenius-DFL
Vice Chair: Persell-DFL
Republican Lead: Hackbarth-R
Anderson, S.-R  Knuth-DFL
Anzelc-DFL  Lillie-DFL
Clark-DFL  McNamara-R
Dill-DFL  Scalze-DFL
Doty-DFL  Torkelson-R
Gunter-R  Carlson-DFL
Hamilton-R  ex-officio**
Hansen-DFL  Solberg-DFL
Hortman-DFL  ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Jenna Duenhoegger ..................296-1774
Committee Legislative Assistant
Melissa Hysing ..................296-3367

Health Care and Human Services Finance Division
585 State Office Building .............296-2228
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
at 1:00 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 22
Chair: Huntley-DFL
Vice Chair:
Republican Lead Health Care Finance:
Abeler-R
Republican Lead Human Services Finance:
Dean-R
Republican Lead Higher Ed.:
Anderson, S.-R
Bly-DFL  Nornes-R
Buesgens-R  Peterson, S.-DFL
Greiling-DFL  Ward-DFL
Hamilton-R  Carlson-DFL
Jackson-DFL  ex-officio**
Laine-DFL  Solberg-DFL
Mack-R  ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Jenn Holcomb ..................296-6422
Committee Legislative Assistant
Jan Horner ..................296-5496

Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance and Policy Division
477 State Office Building .............296-0170
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.
in Room 5*

Members: 21
Chair: Rukavina-DFL
Vice Chair: Bly-DFL
Republican Lead Workforce:
Anderson, S.-R
Republican Lead Higher Ed.: Nornes-R
Atkins-DFL  Norton-DFL
Brynaert-DFL  Obermueller-DFL
Clark-DFL  Poppe-DFL
Dettmer-R  Reinert-DFL
Downey-R  Slocum-DFL
Eastlund-R  Welti-DFL
Gunter-R  Carlson-DFL
Haws-DFL  ex-officio**
Mahoney-DFL  Solberg-DFL
McFarlane-R  ex-officio**
Murphy, M.-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Kerry Kinney Fine ..................296-7427
Committee Legislative Assistant
Sue Scott ..................296-8827

Bioscience and Workforce Development Policy and Oversight Division
591 State Office Building .............296-4277
Meets: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
in Room 200*

Members: 14
Chair: Mahoney-DFL
Vice Chair: Obermueller-DFL
Republican Lead: Gottwald-R
Anderson, B.-R  Norton-DFL
Beard-R  Peppin-R
Brynaert-DFL  Poppe-DFL
Haws-DFL  Slocum-DFL
Hilty-DFL  Winkler-DFL
Mack-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Joanna Dornfeld ..................296-9302
Committee Legislative Assistant
Dianne Ruppert ..................296-4279

**Non-voting member
Member Assignments as of 1/14/09
*Rooms in State Office Building
All area codes are 651
**Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division**
471 State Office Building ..........296-0294
Meets: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 14  
Chair: Clark-DFL  
Vice Chair: Laine-DFL  
Republican Lead: Severson-R  

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Staff  
Committee Administrator  
Brooke Bordsen .................296-5528  
Committee Legislative Assistant  
Jacob Johnson ..................296-5998

**Public Safety Finance Division**
543 State Office Building ..........296-4199
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 17  
Chair: Paymar-DFL  
Vice Chair: Olin-DFL  
Republican Lead: Kohls-R  

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Staff  
Committee Administrator  
Melanie Mcmahon ...............296-4141  
Committee Legislative Assistant  
Libby Wyrum ..................296-5999

**State Government Finance Division**
365 State Office Building ..........296-4257
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 14  
Chair: Kahn-DFL  
Vice Chair: Winkler-DFL  
Republican Lead: Peppin-R  

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Staff  
Committee Administrator  
Brian Shekleton ...............296-4110  
Committee Legislative Assistant  
Krysta Niedernhofer ..........296-7173

**Transportation Finance and Policy Division**
423 State Office Building ..........296-5091
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 20  
Chair: Lieder-DFL  
Vice Chair: Champion-DFL  
Republican Lead: Beard-R  

<table>
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Staff  
Committee Administrator  
Abbey Mahin ..................296-5413  
Committee Legislative Assistant  
Susie Maher ..................296-5494

**K-12 Education Finance Division**
381 State Office Building ..........296-5387
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 21  
Chair: Greiling-DFL  
Vice Chair: Ward-DFL  
Republican Lead: Garofalo-R  

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**Transportation and Transit Policy and Oversight Division**
437 State Office Building ..........296-9281
Meets: Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 16  
Chair: Hornstein-DFL  
Vice Chair: Swails-DFL  
Republican Lead: Urdahl-R  

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Staff  
Committee Administrator  
Abbey Mahin ..................296-5413  
Committee Legislative Assistant  
Susie Maher ..................296-5494

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<th><strong>Non-voting member</strong></th>
<th><strong>Member Assignments as of 1/14/09</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rooms in State Office Building</strong></th>
<th><strong>All area codes are 651</strong></th>
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**Session Weekly** January 16, 2009
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight
351 State Office Building .......... 296-5375
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 20
Chair: Thissen-DFL
Vice Chair: Liebling-DFL
Republican Lead: Abeler-R
Brod-R  Laine-DFL
Bunn-DFL  Loeffler-DFL
Emmer-R  Mack-R
Fritz-DFL  Murphy, E.-DFL
Gardner-DFL  Norton-DFL
Gottwalt-R  Ruud-DFL
Hayden-DFL  Thao-DFL
Huntley-DFL  Torkelson-R
Kelly-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Kate Perushek.............................. 296-3244
Committee Legislative Assistant
Urszula Gryska............................ 296-5492

Licensing Division
359 State Office Building .......... 296-5158
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 8
Chair: Thao-DFL
Vice Chair: Bunn-DFL
Republican Lead: Dean-R
Abeler-R  Norton-DFL
Emmer-R  Ruud-DFL
Murphy, E.-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Kate Perushek.............................. 296-3244
Committee Legislative Assistant
Vickie Benson.............................. 296-5526

K-12 Education Policy and Oversight
563 State Office Building .......... 296-9714
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. in the Basement Hearing Room*

Members: 22
Chair: Mariani-DFL
Vice Chair: Kath-DFL
Republican Lead: McFarlane-R
Abeler-R  Loon-R
Benson-DFL  Murphy, R.
Brynaert-DFL  Norton-DFL
Davnie-DFL  Nornes-R
Demmer-DFL  Norton-DFL
Dittrich-DFL  Obermueller-DFL
Doepke-R  Peterson, S.-DFL
Downey-R  Slawik-DFL
Faust-DFL  Swails-DFL
Greiling-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Christina Gosack............................ 296-5524
Committee Legislative Assistant
Celeste Marin.............................. 296-9115

Public Safety Policy and Oversight
379 State Office Building .......... 296-3709
Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 17
Chair: Hilstrom-DFL
Vice Chair: Bigham-DFL
Republican Lead: Anderson, B.-R
Cornish-R  Lesch-DFL
Drazkowski-R  Masin-DFL
Jackson-DFL  Mullery-DFL
Johnson-DFL  Olin-DFL
Kath-DFL  Paymar-DFL
Kelly-R  Rosenthal-DFL
Kohls-R  Shimanski-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Peter Strohmaier ............................. 296-5069
Committee Legislative Assistant
Erin Huppert.............................. 296-2585

Crime Victims/Criminal Records Division
537 State Office Building .......... 296-4224
Meets: Fridays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 8
Chair: Lesch-DFL
Vice Chair: Shimanski-R
Bigham-DFL  Kohls-R
Hilstrom-DFL  Loon-R
Kath-DFL  Olin-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Patrick Baldwin............................. 296-4283
Committee Legislative Assistant
Erin Huppert.............................. 296-2585

Rules and Legislative Administration
459 State Office Building .......... 296-0172
Meets: At the call of the chair in (No Room Assigned)*

Members: 23
Chair: Sertich-DFL
Vice Chair: Hayden-DFL
Republican Lead: Gunther-R
Anderson, B.-R  Loeffler-DFL
Carlson-DFL  Magnus-R
Dettmer-R  Murphy, E.-DFL
Dill-DFL  Peowski-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL  Peterson, S.-DFL
Hoppe-R  Seifert-R
Hortman-DFL  Simon-DFL
Howes-R  Solberg-DFL
Juhnke-DFL  Westrom-R
Lillie-DFL  Winkler-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Lisa Radzak.............................. 296-2909
Committee Legislative Assistant
Thomas Dicklich............................ 296-9183

**Non-voting member
Member Assignments as of 1/14/09
*Rooms in State Office Building
All area codes are 651
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
491 State Office Building .......... 296-8637
Meets: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 19
Chair: Pelowski-DFL
Vice Chair: Poppe-DFL
Republican Lead: Emmer-R

Anderson, P.-R Lanning-R
Buesgens-R Marquart-DFL
Gottwald-R Morrow-DFL
Hilty-DFL Nelson-DFL
Hornstein-DFL Sanders-R
Kahn-DFL Simon-DFL
Kalin-DFL Winkler-DFL
Kiffmeyer-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Mark Mallander ............................ 296-5389
Committee Legislative Assistant
Kathy Anderson .......................... 296-3806

Local Government Division
569 State Office Building .......... 296-3751
Meets: Mondays at 4:30 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 11
Chair: Nelson-DFL
Vice Chair: Sterner-DFL
Republican Lead: Eastlund-R

Beard-R Lanning-R
Buesgens- R Scalze-DFL
Hilty-DFL Winkler-DFL
Hornstein-DFL Pelowski-DFL
Kalin-DFL ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Christine Murphy .......................... 296-5491
Committee Legislative Assistant
Jennifer Witt ............................... 296-7881

Taxes
509 State Office Building .......... 296-4218
Meets: Mondays at 2:45 p.m. and Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 30
Chair: Lenczewski-DFL
Vice Chair: Reinert-DFL
Republican Lead: Brod-R

Anderson, S.-R Lanning-R
Carlson-DFL Lesch-DFL
Davids-R Liebling-DFL
Davnie-DFL Loeffer-DFL
Demmer-R Loon-R
Dill-DFL Marquart-DFL
Dittrich-DFL Mullery-DFL
Downey-R Murphy, E.-DFL
Eastlund-R Rukavina-DFL
Gardner-DFL Ruud-DFL
Garofalo-R Solberg-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL Tillberry-DFL
Koenen-DFL Zellers-R
Kohls-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Sarah Carlson Wallrath ................. 296-8826
Committee Legislative Assistant
Sasha Bergman ............................ 296-2955

Property and Local Sales Tax Division
597 State Office Building .......... 296-6829
Meets: Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 11
Chair: Marquart-DFL
Vice Chair: Dittrich-DFL
Republican Lead: Lanning-R

Dettmer-R Loeffler-DFL
Garofalo-R Mullery-DFL
Koenen-DFL Scott-R
Lenczewski-DFL Tillberry-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Sarah Carlson Wallrath ................. 296-8826
Committee Legislative Assistant
Paul Cumings ............................. 296-5380

Ways and Means
443 State Office Building .......... 296-2365
Meets: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. or call of the chair in Room 200*

Members: 27
Chair: Solberg-DFL
Vice Chair: Faust-DFL
Republican Lead: Holberg-R

Abeler-R Lenczewski-DFL
Brynaert-DFL Mahoney-DFL
Bunn-DFL Mariani-DFL
Carlson-DFL McNamara-R
Davids-R Nelson-DFL
Dean-R Otremba-DFL
Demmer-R Ruud-DFL
Eken-DFL Scalz-DFL
Hamilton-R Swails-DFL
Hilstrom-DFL Tillberry-DFL
Hoppe-R Westrom-R
Huntley-DFL Seifert-R
Kahn-DFL ex-officio**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Brian Shekleton .......................... 296-4110
Committee Legislative Assistant
Gerrie Boice .............................. 296-5388

**Non-voting member
Member Assignments as of 1/14/09
*Rooms in State Office Building
All area codes are 651
Monday, Jan. 12

HF1-Sertich (DFL)  Finance
State partnership created with federal efforts to restore the American economy, federal Economic Rescue and Recovery Act supplemented, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF2-Greiling (DFL)  Finance
School finance system modified and new education funding framework created.

HF3-Welti (DFL)  State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
State partnership created with federal efforts to Finance HF11-Sertich (DFL)
2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF10-Doty (DFL)  Finance
2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF11-Sertich (DFL)  Finance
State partnership created with federal efforts to restore the American economy, federal Economic Rescue and Recovery Act funding outlined, bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF12-Mahoney (DFL)  Commerce and Labor
Unemployment compensation definitions modified.

HF13-Juhneke (DFL)  State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
State designer selection board abolished.

HF14-Hamilton (R)  State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Jackson County; process provided to make office of county auditor-treasurer appointive.

HF15-Slawik (DFL)  Finance
Early childhood program established for at-risk four-year-olds.

HF16-Dettmer (R)  Finance
Hugo; grant provided for tornado relief.

HF17-Sertich (DFL)  State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Unnecessary state mandates eliminated.

HF18-Hansen (DFL)  Commerce and Labor
Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council support provided.

HF19-Mullery (DFL)  Commerce and Labor
Postponement provided for property sales.

HF20-Winkler (DFL)  State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Web site required with a searchable database of state expenditures.

HF21-Juhnke (DFL)  Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs
Farm unit conservation plan program created, conservation plan required for participation in a state cost-share program and farmland conservation task force created.

HF22-Juhnke (DFL)  Environment Policy and Oversight
Anglers permitted to use two lines to take fish.

HF23-Norton (DFL)  Finance
New steam line from Olmsted Waste-to-Energy Facility to Rochester Community and Technical College Campus funding provided.

HF24-Peppin (R)  Energy Finance and Policy Division
New nuclear-poweredelectric generating plant need for construction certificate ban repealed.

HF25-Thissen (DFL)  Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight
Children’s therapeutic services and supports modified.

HF26-Juhnke (DFL)  Environment Policy and Oversight
Fish spearing from a dark house allowed for non-residents.

HF27-Brod (R)  Taxes
Taxable value limited for reconstructed homes in a disaster area.

HF28-Fritz (DFL)  Finance
Wind generator at the Minnesota State Academies funding provided.

HF29-Benson (DFL)  Finance
Inflationary adjustment limitation removed.

HF30-Benson (DFL)  Finance
Alternative teacher compensation revenue inflationary adjustment added.

HF31-Hansen (DFL)  State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Presidential primary required to be held on the first Tuesday in February, public official definition expanded in campaign finance and public disclosure law, primaries required for election of soil and water conservation district supervisors.

HF32-Benson (DFL)  Finance
Special education revenue formulas full funding provided and appropriation for special education aid made open and standing.

HF33-Anderson, B. (R)  Energy Finance and Policy Division
New nuclear power plant certificate of need prohibition abolished.

HF34-Lech (DFL)  Commerce and Labor
Mandatory arbitration clauses regulated.

HF35-Benson (DFL)  Finance
Referendum allowance limit eliminated.

HF36-Kohls (R)  Public Safety Policy and Oversight
Life imprisonment sentence provided for those convicted of three or more violent felonies.

HF37-Mullery (DFL)  Taxes
Research credit extended to individual income tax and portion of credit made refundable.
HF38-Benson (DFL)  
Finance  
Location equity index created, general education revenue formula modified, and revenue for some school districts increased.

HF39-Slawik (DFL)  
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections  
Election required to fill a vacancy in the office of governor, special election procedure changed to fill a United States Senate vacancy, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF40-Peterson (DFL)  
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight  
Quality rating and improvement system created for high-quality early learning and care programs.

HF41-Lesch (DFL)  
Environment Policy and Oversight  
Plastic bag recycling provided.

HF42-Thissen (DFL)  
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight  
Four-month waiting period waived for unemployed people for MinnesotaCare.

HF43-Lesch (DFL)  
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight  
Public awareness campaign established for postpartum depression.

HF44-Leach (DFL)  
Taxes  
Housing opportunity area tax abatement program provided.

HF45-Bigham (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Penalty provided for careless driving resulting in death and providing for revocation of violator’s driver’s license.

HF46-Mullery (DFL)  
Civil Justice  
Grandparent visitation rights on behalf of the child provided, grandparent visitation rights expanded, procedures specified and mediation required.

HF47-Juhnke (DFL)  
Finance  
Kandiyohi County veterans home funding provided.

HF48-Bigham (DFL)  
Finance  
Red Rock Corridor Transit Way funding provided.

HF49-Morgan (DFL)  
Finance  
Alternative teacher pay calculation for intermediate school districts modified.

HF50-Mullery (DFL)  
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections  
Absentee ballot treatment provided following a vacancy in nomination because of death or catastrophic illness.

HF51-Thissen (DFL)  
Taxes  
Student loan payment credit allowed.

HF52-Mullery (DFL)  
Taxes  
Additional city aid base provided for certain cities, limit on city aid appropriation increased, and aid required to be used for police and city attorney’s office.

HF53-Murphy, E. (DFL)  
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight  
Pharmacy practice provision changed in administering influenza vaccines.

HF54-Hamilton (R)  
Finance  
Jackson County; regional environmental science and nature education center funding provided.

HF55-Falk (DFL)  
Finance  
Lac qui Parle Valley; transfer of funds authorized for USD 2853.

HF56-Hosch (DFL)  
Finance  
Stearns County; grantee for parks appropriation corrected.

HF57-Emmer (R)  
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections  
Voters required to provide picture identification before receiving a ballot, issuance of voter identification card provided at no charge, and provisional balloting procedure established.

HF58-Mullery (DFL)  
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight  
Middle school students taught about the juvenile and criminal justice systems and the consequences of delinquent and criminal conduct.

HF59-Mullery (DFL)  
Environment Policy and Oversight  
Environmental Justice Act established.

HF60-Hamilton (R)  
Environment Policy and Oversight  
State trail established.

HF61-Mullery (DFL)  
Taxes  
Health insurance premiums subtraction allowed.

HF62-Atkins (DFL)  
Taxes  
Inver Grove Heights; sales tax exemptions provided for the expansion, remodeling, or improvement of the public safety building and city hall.

HF63-Atkins (DFL)  
Finance  
Inver Grove Heights; appropriating money for the completion of Heritage Village Park.

HF64-Atkins (DFL)  
Transportation Finance and Policy Division  
Dakota County; Rock Island Swing Bridge removal prohibited for two years.

HF65-Mullery (DFL)  
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight  
Public school students required to complete service learning hours as a condition of graduating from high school.

HF66-Mullery (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Misdemeanor penalties increased.

HF67-Mullery (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Gross misdemeanor created for assaulting a utility employee or contractor.

HF68-Mullery (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Consecutive sentencing allowed when an offender commits one or more additional crimes between the time of the commission of one crime and the time of sentencing on that crime, and Sentencing Guidelines Commission directed to make consistent guidelines.

HF69-Mullery (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Violent offender’s consent for on-demand searches provided as a condition of being released on probation, supervised release or parole.

HF70-Mullery (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Pharmacies required to provide certain drug purchase information to law enforcement.

HF71-Greiling (DFL)  
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections  
Conference committee communications required to be open to the public, budget negotiations required, and bill and budget negotiations between governor and legislative leaders required to be open to the public.

HF72-Norton (DFL)  
Finance  
Lifelong learning account program established, tax credits allowed to employers and employees for contributions to lifelong learning accounts, funding provided and money appropriated.

HF73-Lieder (DFL)  
Finance  
General Fund money transfer to state airports fund required.

HF74-Mullery (DFL)  
Civil Justice  
Attorney fees provided for invalid medical assistance liens.

HF75-Brown (DFL)  
Finance  
Pupil unit count increased for all-day, every day kindergarten pupils.

HF76-Lesch (DFL)  
Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division  
Uniform residential tenant reports provided.
HF77-Mullery (DFL)
Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health
Finance Division
Tenant applicant screening fee provisions modified.

HF78-Eastlund (R)
Finance
2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF79-Brown (DFL)
Finance
Wind energy production tax removed from county apportionment deduction for school districts.

HF80-Mullery (DFL)
Commerce and Labor
Consumer credit score or history use prohibited by insurers in underwriting automobile insurance policies.

HF81-Lesch (DFL)
Commerce and Labor
Discrimination in auto insurance based upon geographical area prohibited.

HF82-Mullery (DFL)
Commerce and Labor
Discrimination in auto insurance based upon geographic location within the Twin Cities metropolitan area prohibited.

HF83-Huntley (DFL)
Finance
Duluth; new terminal facilities funding provided for the Duluth airport.

HF84-Mullery (DFL)
Commerce and Labor
Consumer fraud regulated.

HF85-Juhnke (DFL)
Public Safety Policy and Oversight
Mounting global positioning systems on windshields authorized.

HF86-Hortman (DFL)
Environment Policy and Oversight
Carbon intensity reduction standard established for transportation fuels.

HF87-Mullery (DFL)
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Judicial candidate voluntary conduct restrictions established, and ballot format for judicial elections modified.

HF88-Atkins (DFL)
Commerce and Labor
State and airline company full agreement enforcement required.

HF89-Kohls (R)
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Immigration law enforcement noncooperation ordinances and policies prohibited, and immigration-related data use provided.

HF90-Mullery (DFL)
Civil Justice
General exemption provided for certain property owned by a debtor.

HF91-Slocum (DFL)
Finance
Health and safety revenue modified to include elevator repair costs.

HF92-Murphy, M. (DFL)
Finance
Duluth; Lake Superior Zoo facility repairs funding provided.

HF93-Mullery (DFL)
Public Safety Policy and Oversight
Courts permitted to impose consecutive sentences for certain repeat offenders.

HF94-Mahoney (DFL)
Finance
Bikeway directed to be added to Lafayette Bridge when rebuilt.

HF95-Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Health insurance premium credit created.

HF96-Lesch (DFL)
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight
Clinical trial registration provided.

HF97-Solberg (DFL)
Commerce and Labor
Convention centers authorized to obtain liquor licenses.

HF98-Hamilton (R)
Finance
Windom; Fourth Avenue bridge replacement funding provided.

HF99-Atkins (DFL)
Public Safety Policy and Oversight
I-35W Bridge collapse survivor compensation when rebuilt.

HF100-Winkler (DFL)
Civil Justice
1-35W Bridge collapse survivor compensation process provisions clarified, indemnification rights specified, records of the special master panel access limited, testimonial privileges specified and third-party subrogation or recovery claims prohibition clarified.

HF101-Kalin (DFL)
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Taylors Falls; border city development zone powers established.

HF102-Slawik (DFL)
Taxes
Oakdale; technical corrections made in the city’s authority to establish tax increment financing districts.

HF103-Atkins (DFL)
Civil Justice
Single occurrence liability cap removed and cross references conformed.

HF104-Dittrich (DFL)
Finance
Permanent school fund revenue required to be set aside for school technology purposes.

HF105-Dittrich (DFL)
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight
Financial literacy curriculum incorporated into the economics course required for high school graduation and money appropriated.

HF106-Swails (DFL)
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight
P-20 education partnership established.

HF107-Emmer (R)
Finance
School boards authorized to spend staff development revenue on CPR and automatic external defibrillator training and first aid certification.

HF108-Thissen (DFL)
Finance
Seat belt violation made a primary offense in all seating positions regardless of age.

HF109-Dettmer (R)
Environment Policy and Oversight
Watershed districts and watershed management organizations required to submit information to counties.

HF110-Anzelc (DFL)
Finance
Irv Anderson Memorial Highway designated.

HF111-Winkler (DFL)
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Divestment required from certain investments relating to Iran.

HF112-Nelson (DFL)
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight
Intermediate care facilities for persons with developmental disabilities licensure authorized to replace one larger facility, and transition period rate and payment rate for the new facilities established.

HF113-Dean (R)
Finance
Professional education loan forgiveness program expanded for child mental health professionals.

HF114-Garofalo (R)
Transportation Finance and Policy Division
Interstate 35E speed limit designated as 55 mph from West Seventh Street to marked Interstate 94 in St. Paul.

HF115-Lesch (DFL)
Public Safety Policy and Oversight
Dog owners required to take responsible dog owner classes and pass certain tests, and database required.

HF116-Ward (DFL)
Transportation Finance and Policy Division
Type III school bus driver qualifications modified.

HF117-Solberg (DFL)
Finance
Deficiency funding provided for Public Safety and Human Services departments.

Thursday, Jan. 15

HF99-Atkins (DFL)
Taxes
Minnesota Land Conservation Property Tax Law created.

HF100-Winkler (DFL)
Civil Justice
School boards authorized to spend staff development revenue on CPR and automatic external defibrillator training and first aid certification.

HF101-Kalin (DFL)
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight
Taylors Falls; border city development zone powers established.

HF102-Slawik (DFL)
Taxes
Oakdale; technical corrections made in the city’s authority to establish tax increment financing districts.

HF103-Atkins (DFL)
Civil Justice
Single occurrence liability cap removed and cross references conformed.

HF104-Dittrich (DFL)
Finance
Permanent school fund revenue required to be set aside for school technology purposes.

HF105-Dittrich (DFL)
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight
Financial literacy curriculum incorporated into the economics course required for high school graduation and money appropriated.

HF106-Swails (DFL)
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight
P-20 education partnership established.

HF107-Emmer (R)
Finance
School boards authorized to spend staff development revenue on CPR and automatic external defibrillator training and first aid certification.

HF108-Thissen (DFL)
Finance
Seat belt violation made a primary offense in all seating positions regardless of age.

HF109-Dettmer (R)
Environment Policy and Oversight
Watershed districts and watershed management organizations required to submit information to counties.

HF110-Anzelc (DFL)
Finance
Irv Anderson Memorial Highway designated.

HF111-Winkler (DFL)
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections
Divestment required from certain investments relating to Iran.

HF112-Nelson (DFL)
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight
Intermediate care facilities for persons with developmental disabilities licensure authorized to replace one larger facility, and transition period rate and payment rate for the new facilities established.

HF113-Dean (R)
Finance
Professional education loan forgiveness program expanded for child mental health professionals.

HF114-Garofalo (R)
Transportation Finance and Policy Division
Interstate 35E speed limit designated as 55 mph from West Seventh Street to marked Interstate 94 in St. Paul.

HF115-Lesch (DFL)
Public Safety Policy and Oversight
Dog owners required to take responsible dog owner classes and pass certain tests, and database required.

HF116-Ward (DFL)
Transportation Finance and Policy Division
Type III school bus driver qualifications modified.

HF117-Solberg (DFL)
Finance
Deficiency funding provided for Public Safety and Human Services departments.
HF118-Hosch (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Emergency vehicle status accorded to vehicles operated by protective agent for escorting funeral procession or oversized loads.

HF119-Hosch (DFL)  
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections  
Local governments authorized to regulate use of escort motorcycles or vehicles by licensed protective agents.

HF120-Hosch (DFL)  
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight  
Rural health cooperative arrangement oversight established.

HF121-Sailer (DFL)  
Finance  
Clearwater County Veterans Memorial Highway designated.

HF122-Dill (DFL)  
State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections  
Disability benefit application deadline exception provided for general state employees retirement plan of the Minnesota State Retirement System.

HF123-Dill (DFL)  
Finance  
General Fund money required to be transferred to state airports fund.

HF124-Liebling (DFL)  
Finance  
High-speed rail line between Chicago and the Twin Cities through Rochester funding provided.

HF125-Fritz (DFL)  
Finance  
Minnesota state academies campus graduate housing funding provided.

HF126-Mahoney (DFL)  
Energy Finance and Policy Division  
Nuclear power plant certificate of need prohibition abolished.

HF127-Holberg (R)  
Commerce and Labor  
Motor vehicle definition clarified in statutory provision deeming the driver to be the agent of the owner in case of accident.

HF128-Dill (DFL)  
Environment Policy and Oversight  
Bow and gun case requirements removed.

HF129-Bigham (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Electronic devices prohibited to sexually solicit children.

HF130-Bigham (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Predatory offenders prohibited from accessing and using social networking Web sites which require registration.

HF131-Swails (DFL)  
K-12 Education Policy and Oversight  
Temporary, alternative graduation requirements established for high school seniors who do not receive a passing score on a state GRAD test, and notations of high school student achievement authorized.

HF132-Cornish (R)  
Environment Policy and Oversight  
All-terrain vehicle operation allowed on county roads.

HF133-Garofalo (R)  
Finance  
Dakota County; Highway 3 funding provided.

HF134-Garofalo (R)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Careless driving resulting in death classified as a gross misdemeanor.

HF135-Bly (DFL)  
Health Care and Human Services Policy and Oversight  
All necessary health care availability and affordability guaranteed for every Minnesotan, establishing Minnesota Health Plan, Minnesota Health Board, Minnesota Health Fund, Office of Health Quality and Planning, patient advocacy ombudsman and inspector general for the Minnesota Health Plan.

HF136-Koenen (DFL)  
Taxes  
Emergency services special taxing district sunset date eliminated.

HF137-Otremba (DFL)  
Taxes  
Agricultural products for purposes of property taxation definition expanded.

HF138-Morrow (DFL)  
Finance  
School finance system modified and new education funding framework created.

HF139-Doty (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Domestic violence awareness month designated for month of October.

HF140-Garofalo (R)  
Taxes  
Certain pet sales exempted from sales taxes.

HF141-Hackathorn (R)  
Energy Finance and Policy Division  
Nuclear power plant certificate of need moratorium abolished.

HF142-Kalin (DFL)  
Finance  
Lindstrom; Trunk Highway 8 funding provided.

HF143-Kalin (DFL)  
Finance  
Chisago County; nursing facilities payment rate increased to geographic group III median rate.

HF144-Dittrich (DFL)  
Transportation Finance and Policy Division  
Transportation commissioner directed to enter into agreements with radio and television media for public service announcements in exchange for traffic information.

HF145-Hilstrom (DFL)  
Public Safety Policy and Oversight  
Methamphetamine precursor drug logs maintained by retailers retention time period specified and inspection of logs provided to be open to law enforcement.

HF146-Doty (DFL)  
Finance  
Upsala; regional community center funding provided.

HF147-Doty (DFL)  
Finance  
Motley; Tri-County Regional Services Center funding provided.

HF148-Doty (DFL)  
Finance  
Pierz; Highway 25 reconstruction funding provided.

HF149-Demmer (R)  
Taxes  
Residential heating fuel sales tax exemption expanded.

HF150-Anzelc (DFL)  
Environment Policy and Oversight  
All-terrain vehicle use allowed by the disabled along certain trails, and hunting provisions for disabled hunters modified.

HF151-Mahoney (DFL)  
Taxes  
Apprenticeship training facilities property tax exemption extended to land on which the building is located.

HF152-Juhnke (DFL)  
Finance  
2008 Green Acres law changes repealed.

HF154-Hansen (DFL)  
Finance  
Highway 52 barrier replacement funding provided.

HF155-Anzelc (DFL)  
Commerce and Labor  
Sunday liquor sales allowed; tax receipts dedicated to county social services for children, and fund created.

HF156-Doty (DFL)  
Finance  
Morrison County; New Platte River Watershed dam funding provided.

If you have Internet access, visit the Legislature’s Web page at: www.leg.mn
Budget Trends continued from page 10

sure you have enough of a reserve in place to make necessary changes. If you have a budget reserve, you should be able to use it in times like these, but you don’t have one.”

Kiedrowski, a former state finance commissioner, said therein lays the problem.

“The beauty of this (report) is it’s all in the fundamentals. This is absolutely the right time to put these recommendations to use because there is no pressure. The public doesn’t want to implement them because when times are good they want you to spend and reduce taxes.” But, he said, the good times never go on forever.

He added that commission members found the report very sobering. “There’s a harsh reality facing us. It would be nice to have recommendations to grow the economy faster in Minnesota. We have a structural imbalance.”

Some final recommendations include:

• releasing a demographic forecast at the start of each biennium;
• creating a permanent long-range planning function in state government;
• if the budget reserve is depleted in the current biennium, it should be replenished within two biennia; and
• the governor and Legislature should create a structurally balanced budget for the current and following biennia.

“The reality is that these recommendations don’t mean anything unless you follow through,” Goodno said. “You have the ability to change those statutes. It’s up to you to decide if there’s a will to do that.”

Audit reports continued from page 11

In addition to more review and security steps, Lori Mo, assistant commissioner with the accounting services division, said the department has asked agencies to further review employees that have incompatible department has asked agencies to further

Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope) sponsors SF57 that would, in part, require legislative auditor recommendations be tracked by the finance commissioner to ensure implementation. The bill, which has no House companion, awaits action by the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

What else can the Legislature do?

Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park) lamented that the Legislature doesn’t have the time to do oversight as well as it should. “We rely very heavily on you and others to bring to our attention these lapses and opportunity for reform. It’s even more important this year. … If we’re trying to strive for maximum taxpayer value this is a way to get it.”

Nobles said the best thing members can do is continue to support office efforts, be explicit in expectations on agency spending, keep a focus on the issue, and be mindful of position eliminations due to budget cuts. Cutting an agency from three account clerks to one, he said, could make separation of duties more difficult.

Youth in Government continued from page 12

political science, public policy, history or international relations in college. The program isn’t necessarily about forming future politicians, Zekowski said, but active citizens.

“I think it makes people want to step up and do something,” he said. “Even if you’re not interested in pursuing a political career, it makes people better voters and better constituents to their legislators.”

Adults involved with Youth in Government say the teenagers’ enthusiasm offers a sure cure for jaded attitudes.

Rhonda Fox, an advisor to the Henry Sibley High School group and parent of a participant, said she’s impressed with how deeply engaged students become in the program. “This is becoming their home. They will know how to effect change. They won’t be afraid to try.”

“It breaks down cynicism,” said Program Manager Chris Rasinen.

After 17 years with the program, first as a participant, then a volunteer and now a staff member, he looks forward to a new session every January. “It’s cold and you smell the bus fumes. It’s time to go to the Capitol. It’s that time of year.”

January 16, 2009
Staying at the ‘Graybar Hotel’

State’s prison population on July 1, 2008 ................................................. 9,224
Average annual increase in previous eight years ...................................... 369
Projected state prison population on July 1, 2018 ................................... 11,288
Projected annual increase between July 1, 2008, and that date ............... 206
Projected annual female prisoner increase in next 10 years .................... 2
Percent increase in Minnesota’s prison population in last 25 years .......... 322
State and federal increase, as approximate, in that time .......................... 300
Incarceration rate per 100,000 residents, based on a 2005 study .............. 300
State rank ................................................................................................. 49
National average ..................................................................................... 750
State crime rate ranking .......................................................................... 31
Percent of the July 1, 2008, prison population that was male .................. 93.6
Percent of state inmates on July 1, 2008, who were white ...................... 56.3
Estimated percent of Minnesota’s 2007 population who were white .......... 86
Per cents for black state inmates on July 1, 2008, versus 2007 state population 33.5, 4.3
Percent for American Indians ................................................................. 7.8, 1.1
Percent of July 1, 2008, prisoners age 50 or older ................................. 10.5
Percent four, eight years earlier ............................................................... 7.4, 5.9
Prisoners age 18 or younger in the adult state prison system on July 1, 2008 13
Percent of July 1, 2008, prisoners who were serving time for person crimes, such as murder, assault, robbery or kidnapping ............................... 32
Percent in for drug, sex crimes ............................................................... 20, 17.6
Of the 735 people sentenced for felony DWI offenses in 2007, those who received prison, local jail time .............................................................. 183, 525
As percent of the General Fund, state spending on corrections in 2007 2.7
State rank ................................................................................................. 49
National percent average ......................................................................... 6.8
Department of Corrections budget for Fiscal Year 2009, in millions .......... $472.3
Per capita corrections spending ............................................................... $143
State rank ................................................................................................. 38
Pardon applications received by the Board of Pardons in 2007 ................. 39
Pardons granted ....................................................................................... 18

— M. Cook