



# 2023 REPORT on the MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE

by the  
LEGISLATIVE EVALUATION ASSEMBLY  
of MINNESOTA, INC











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## 2023 LEA HONOREES

									
Senator Bruce Anderson 96%	Senator Cal Bahr 96%	Senator Steve Drzakowski 96%	Senator Justin Eichorn 96%	Senator Steve Green 96%	Senator Eric Lucero 96%	Senator Jordan Rasmusson 100%	Rep. Josh Heintzeman 96%	Rep. Harry Niska 96%	Rep. Isaac Schultz 96%

*Honorable Mention Senate:* G. Gruenhagen, Je. Howe, J. Jasinski, M. Koran, B. Lieske, W. Limmer, J. Rarick, P. Utke, N. Wesenberg, T. Westrom.

*Honorable Mention House:* P. Altendorf, B. Bakeberg, J. Burkel, B. Davis, M. Fogelman, W. Hudson, J. Joy, J. Koznick, S. Mekeland, T. Murphy, T. O’Driscoll, B. Pfarr, J. Schomacker, P. Scott, C. Swedzinski, P. Torkelson, M. Wiener.

## 2023 Legislative Review

The 2023 legislature sought and achieved far-reaching and radical changes to Minnesota’s laws and policies by virtue of a slim majority in the House, and a one-vote majority in the Senate. They violated the U.S. Constitution which is central to the principles of the LEA credo. The theme is to dismantle the traditions and standards that are critical to holding our society together: free speech, equality before the law, the idea of merit, personal responsibility, frugality, citizenship, freedom of contract, private property, and punishment of criminals. We have been launched on the road to serfdom, and the fast track to chaos.

**Attack on the First Amendment—Our First and Most Important Freedom:** We now have a thought-crime database (item #15), more regulation from a broader definition of “express advocacy” (#13), and penalties for professionals who attempt to persuade customers contrary to government-approved ideology (#4). The most anti-religious organization and the most anti-parent organization will be state government (#5). State government has denied police officers the right to join any group that is unapproved by the state (#15).

**Spending:** Legislators established a reckless and unsustainable level of spending for the 2024-2025 biennium (#7, #11, #19, #23). They budgeted \$10.7 billion more in spending than in revenue. They funded the deficit by drawing on the \$12.3 billion of actual

surplus (cash in the bank), reducing the June 2025 forecasted surplus to \$1.6 billion. (Regarding the often-reported \$18 billion surplus, \$6 billion was just a forecast, not an actual surplus.) The budgeted spending of \$71.5 billion is an increase of 38 percent over the just-ended biennium and 51 percent over the previous biennium. The consequence of using the surplus to expand the government (not returning it to taxpayers) sets Minnesota up for a massive deficit in the next biennium. Plans to handle this deficit include a reduction in spending in those out years. It should be noted, that in the last 60 years, legislators have reduced spending from one biennium to the next exactly one time.

**Energy Spending:** On top of the spending of tax money, the legislature is demanding 100 percent carbon-free energy by 2040 with an estimated cost of \$300 billion to ratepayers or about \$18 billion per year. They continued the moratorium on carbon-free nuclear power plant construction. (#9)

**K-12 Spending:** State spending grew by \$4.1 billion (20.2 percent). The E-12 bill contains no progress measurements required to monitor math proficiencies or other skills or to close the nation’s widest education gap between White and Black students, but rather ideological mandates unrelated to improving the basic metrics. This legislative session undermined whatever supposed partnership the education community has said it wants with parents. For example, school boards no longer need voter approval to renew operational levies. They can impose debt on local citizens

without their approval, and regardless of the schools' performance. (#21)

**New Entitlement Spending:** The legislature created new entitlements that transformed a social safety net for people falling through the cracks to subsidies for the middle class and even the rich by choosing to fund free school breakfasts and lunches for everyone, free college for families earning under \$80,000, paid family leave, and removal of restrictions to access MinnesotaCare. Existing entitlements have no metrics to measure those who become successfully independent of safety net entitlements while agencies continue to measure a growing number of dependencies to justify expansion of programs. (#6, #7, #20, #22)

**War Against Tradition:** This country was founded on Judeo-Christian principles that played a central role in shaping our laws and founding documents. These values and principles have stood the test of time. Rejection of those values includes ensuring abortion on demand without limit, shielding minors from parental oversight when seeking removal of healthy organs, allowing doctors to treat unwanted babies born alive as biological waste, and adding fuel to a victim-oriented culture that pits identity groups of Americans against each other. (#3, #5, #15, #21).

**Election Engineering:** It is vital that our elections retain the confidence of the citizens to maintain respect for our laws and institutions. In pursuit of effortless voting, our legislature has enacted laws that will challenge that confidence by breaking down safeguards intended to ensure integrity and transparency in elections. (#12, #13)

**Legislative Malpractice:** The legislature passed numerous laws that violate the single-subject provisions of the Minnesota Constitution. Legislators created bills that abdicated the legislative role in the governance of the state, ceding power to the executive branch. Examples include expansion of unelected commissions, waiving oversight of public union contracts, and severely limiting consent for cabinet positions. New dedicated slush funds for transportation and housing are independent of the legislative appropriation process. Legislative malpractice eases the way for the concentration of power within the executive branch. (#12, #19, #20)

Rather than seek consensus, the majority caucus imposed ideological mandates on an unsuspecting citizenry. We should hope that this steamrolled session of 2023 is never repeated.

## 1. Peace Officer and Firefighter PTSD Claims

### HF1234. Rep. Her. [SF1959. Sen. Frentz.]

**Summary:** The bill addresses the increase in PTSD disability claims by first responders following the protests and riots of 2020 by implementing standards to provide counseling to the employee and to require "adequate medical proof of disability" prior to claims being paid. The bill clarifies "total and permanent duty disability" will prevent someone from earning "substantial gainful employment" within a year of the PTSD claim. The bill requires treatment before and

after PTSD claims are approved. It appropriates \$104M for Public Employees Retirement Association and Minnesota State Retirement System psychological treatment administration, and establishes wellness training to prevent or mitigate PTSD.

**Analysis:** First responders have become targets during the rise of the BLM movement. It has been difficult to recruit police, and early retirements have skyrocketed. Critics have made claims that many early retirees were increasing their benefits by making false PTSD claims. This legislation puts in place several standards to ensure those suffering from PTSD receive appropriate medical care, diagnosis, and benefits while also preventing taxpayer funds from going to public employees who make unsubstantiated PTSD claims. The bill provides greater fiscal control and clarifies standards for resolving disability claims.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a YES vote. The bill passed the Senate 40-22, the House 78-54, and was signed into law.

## 2. Driver's Licenses for Illegals

### HF4. Rep. Gomez. [SF27. Sen. Mohamed.]

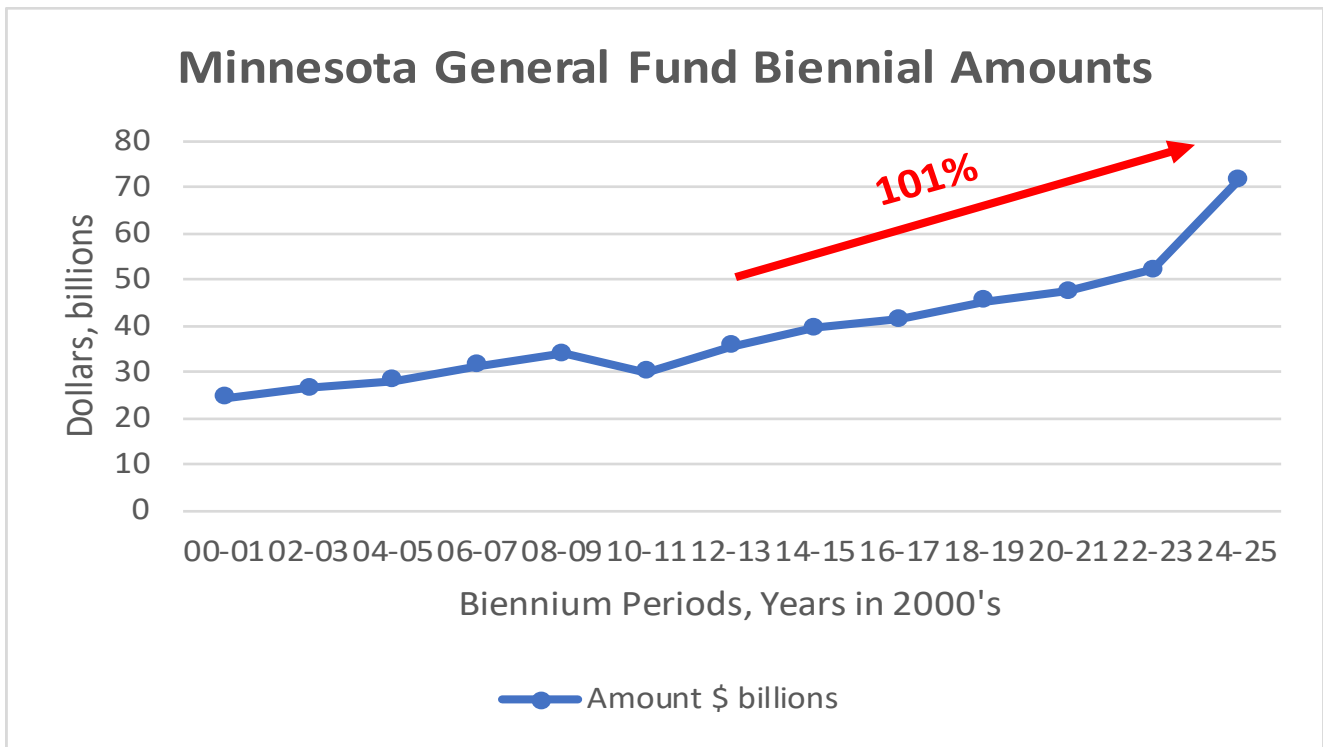
**Summary:** HF4 removes the requirement to show proof of legal presence in the U.S. when applying for a "noncompliant" (non-Real ID) Minnesota driver's license or state ID card. License agents must not inquire about the citizenship or lawful presence of an applicant. Noncompliant licenses must bear no indicator relating to the lawful presence of the license holder. Data on individuals holding a non-compliant license must not be shared with any agency that primarily enforces immigration law, unless pursuant to a search warrant or court order. Such data must be shared with the Secretary of State to improve the accuracy of voter registration records. HF4 expands the range of documents for proving identity when applying for a non-compliant license, allowing foreign passports and foreign birth certificates to be used for this purpose. The bill grants greater discretion to the Commissioner of Public Safety for creating new rules about driver's license procedures.

**Analysis:** This bill provides documentation for people who are in the country without permission. Employers rely on such immigrants to fill jobs in several industries, despite laws to the contrary. The lack of a reliable photo ID complicates the work of law enforcement. Supporters of HF4 cite a humanitarian purpose: to alleviate immigrants' fears that a minor traffic stop may lead to deportation. Opponents point out that such fears apply only to those who are here illegally.

HF4 abets lawbreaking by businesses that violate employment laws, thereby creating an underclass of workers who can be mistreated with impunity. By lowering standards for proof of identity, HF4 will fuel illegal immigration, bringing unfair competition to lower-income Minnesotans and lawful immigrants. The degraded proof of identity will also undermine trust in Minnesota licenses as identification for commerce, banking, travel, or voter registration.

This bill requires state officials and civil servants to flout federal immigration laws, and it gives cover to employers and immigrants committing illegal acts.

# Reckless and Unsustainable



**Recommendation:** LEA supports ordered liberty and the rule of law. If citizens (or their state governments) get to pick and choose which laws to obey, we don't have liberty, we have chaos. HF4's complicity with an illegal labor market outweighs any benefits it may provide. LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 34-31, the House 70-60, and was signed into law.

### 3. Abortion on Demand Without Restrictions

#### HF1. Rep. Kotyza-Witthuhn. [SF1. Sen. McEwen.]

**Summary:** This bill explicitly provides for an individual's right to seek and obtain any medical service related to pregnancy and reproductive health. The latter is defined very broadly to include any medical advice or treatment that is associated with contraception or pregnancy, including the unrestricted right to an abortion. The bill defines the right of individuals to make "autonomous decisions" as pertains to reproductive health matters. The new language specifically references the individual liberty, personal privacy, and equality provisions of the Minnesota Constitution as justification for the bill.

**Analysis:** The recent overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the U.S. Supreme Court has removed abortion from federal oversight, citing the lack of specific federal legislation and the Constitution stating anything not covered by it as "reserved to the states." This has prompted states to codify abortion rights into law, with some protecting the unborn and others not. Minnesota's legal position was enacted with the passage of HF1. It does not protect the unborn, and it requires no parental notification in the case of minors or medical standards for abortion, regardless of the stage of pregnancy.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 34-33, the House 69-65, and was signed into law.

### 4. "Conversion Therapy" Prohibition

#### HF16. Rep. Hollins. [SF23. Sen. Dibble.]

**Summary:** This bill prohibits licensed mental health professionals and practitioners from providing "conversion therapy" to children and vulnerable adults and specifies that such therapy is not covered by medical assistance. The bill also prohibits paid professionals from "misleading" advertising practices relating to conversion therapy, including representing homosexuality as a mental disorder.

**Analysis:** The bill applies to licensed medical practitioners and mental health professionals, including all school counselors. It prevents counselors from having a discussion with a child confused about gender or sexual orientation which might result in the child maintaining a heterosexual orientation or becoming comfortable with their anatomy. Ironically, drugs and surgeries to alter the body are defined as "gender-affirming care" and are not banned by this bill. It is a one-way street and there is no disclosure to parents that counselors may only offer advice that will convert their child to the opposite gender, assist them in seeking medical treatment for reassigning their sex, or support a transition from heterosexual to homosexual orientation.

The bill erodes patient care and parental trust. The government is dictating one medical diagnosis or treatment for patients. While the bill provides an exemption for clergy and non-licensed counselors, it will undoubtedly have a chilling effect on their conversations with children and vulnerable adults. Also, the section on misrepresentation imposes a state viewpoint of homosexuality on all therapy, not just limited to children and vulnerable adults. The definition of vulnerable adult includes a broad definition of mental, or emotional dysfunction, which could apply to all adults suffering from gender dysphoria.

There is no insurance billing code for conversion therapy, and no medical provider currently advertises conversion therapy in Minnesota, so the medical assistance coverage prohibition has little impact.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 36-27, the House 81-46, and was signed into law.

## 5. Sanctuary State for Children’s Radical Gender “Care”

**HF146. Rep. Finke. [SF63. Sen. Maye Quade.]**

**Summary:** This bill declares that the policy of Minnesota is to cease cooperation with other states that interfere with “gender-affirming care”. The bill defines “gender-affirming care” as “medically necessary health care or mental health care that respects the gender identity of the patient, as experienced and defined by the patient”. Changes are made in statute for child custody, subpoenas, extradition, arrest, and judicial cooperation. Each change inserts an exception prohibiting the customary cooperation between the states if “gender-affirming care” is at issue, and if the laws of the other state do not comport with Minnesota’s “gender-affirming care” laws.

**Analysis:** The object of this bill is to establish Minnesota as a “sanctuary state” for residents of other states to be immune from court rulings in other states prohibiting controversial medical procedures. It has been called the “kidnapping” bill because it voids the deference to parents who are residents of other states in some court decisions involving custody of minors.

The bill’s definition of “gender-affirming care” is highly subjective and transitory, and embedding such a definition in statute is not a solid foundation for court decisions.

The most insidious provision of this bill applies to both in-state and out-of-state residents. It is that a child who is “unable to obtain gender-affirming care” is equated to a child that is abandoned or in need of emergency state protection. This is particularly unwise when “gender-affirming care” consists of a collection of highly controversial medical treatments with almost no long-term data on safety and no conclusive data on whether the treatments yield positive outcomes.

**Recommendation:** This bill upends longstanding cooperation among states, possibly violating the Full Faith and Credit Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and substantially erodes the authority of parents raising their children. LEA favored a NO vote. It was passed by the Senate 34-30, the House 68-62, and signed into law.

## 6. Free Breakfast and Lunch for Children Attending Schools

**HF5. Rep. Jordan. [SF123. Sen. Gustafson.]**

**Summary:** With the passage of this bill, Minnesota becomes the fourth state to provide free school meals regardless of family income. Schools that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National School Lunch Program are required to be part of the Minnesota free school meals program. Money is appropriated to the MN Department of Education from the state’s general fund to cover the difference between the costs of all school breakfasts/lunches

and the federal reimbursements, as well as administrative costs. A separate section in the bill specifies that funds will also be appropriated to ensure that no school district which currently qualifies for universal federal school meals subsidies will lose state compensatory aid to public schools that serve a high percentage of minority and/or lower-income-family students, though the state will cover meal costs not reimbursed by the federal government for both richer and poorer districts.

**Analysis:** Momentum and popular support for a new school-meals entitlement grew after the federal government provided free school meals to almost all school-age youths (though not most home-school students) as part of the COVID relief bills. While schools were closed to in-person learning, utilization of school meals increased as families liked the convenience of picking up free meals at school curbside without having to prove income eligibility. School offices liked not having to monitor meal-account balances for any families since the feds were covering all costs. Universal federal coverage ended prior to the start of the 2022-23 school year, and as a result many states around the nation are introducing legislation to cover all school meals. Recent changes in statutes that prohibit treating students with unpaid school-lunch bills differently when providing meals, referred to as “lunch shaming,” coupled with families who feel entitled to not be charged anymore for school meals, have led to an explosion in school-lunch debt since the COVID free meals program ended. Unlike other states that have recently passed school meals programs, all public and private schools choosing to participate will be fully covered, though it still will not apply to home schools.

**Recommendation:** This bill unfairly takes taxpayer dollars, especially from lower-middle class taxpayers home-schooling their students or without any students, to cover meal costs for students from the wealthiest families or elite private schools. Very few would have regarded such assistance as a public good as recently as four years ago, before COVID responses created a “new normal” demand for the entitlement and convenience of universal free school meals. The Feeding Our Future fraud scandal demonstrated how little oversight or demand there was for feeding hungry people in this state; what is to keep schools from requesting more meal reimbursements than students selecting hot meals when everything is covered? Finally, this program will result in families developing dependence on schools for half of all meals served to their kids each week, giving schools artificial value for providing services even if they are not adequately fulfilling their educational responsibilities. LEA favored a NO vote on the bill that passed the Senate 38-26, the House 71-54, and was signed into law.

## 7. Paid Family and Medical Leave Mandate

**HF2. Rep. Richardson. [SF2. Sen. Mann.]**

**Summary:** This bill mandates that an employer must provide employees with paid leave for qualifying family or medical reasons, via a new state-government-run insurance plan or a comparable private insurance plan (which must meet state guidelines). The bill authorizes the creation of a new division to administer the plan and

provides terms for the following: eligibility requirements for both employees and employers, taxation to participate in the plan (generally a payroll tax of 0.7 percent—reduced for businesses with fewer than 30 employees), terms for calculation of benefits and duration of payout, and future funding of the plan. The plan would cover leaves related to employees with serious health conditions, the need to provide care for a loved one with serious health conditions, or a period of bonding with a new child. The maximum length of the benefit varies depending on the circumstance (e.g., up to 12 weeks for a pregnancy or serious medical health condition, or qualifying family leave). Under certain circumstances, a maximum benefit of 24 weeks can be obtained. The plan will require the construction of a new IT system for collection of personal data and maintenance of records related to the plan. The new agency is authorized to provide penalties for failure to comply.

**Analysis:** Many large companies already provide some family/medical leave benefits. This law makes it a requirement for all employers to provide this benefit to employees. The spirit of this law is arguably laudable; however, the terms of the plan as constructed impose additional, oppressive bureaucratic burdens on employers, particularly smaller businesses. Little consideration is given to the difficulty an extended absence of a key employee might have on a small business. In creating a new state program, a new opportunity for fraud and abuse is also created, especially since this plan needs to be coordinated with other plans, e.g., worker’s compensation and medical disability. Unlike laws enacted in New Hampshire and Vermont, which are voluntary state-run paid leave programs, Minnesota has joined 11 other states (none in the Midwest) with the passage of a paid mandatory family medical leave bill. The concern is that the establishment of another government bureaucracy will result in further imposed taxation and regulatory burden, especially on small businesses.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a vote of NO on this bill. It was passed by the Senate 34-32, the House 68-62 and signed into law.

## 8. Expanded Rideshare Company Regulations

**HF2369. Rep. Hassan. [SF2319. Sen. Fateh.]**

**Summary:** This bill would set separate, detailed per-mile and per-minute compensation rates inside and outside the seven-county metro area for drivers who contract their services with transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft. These rates would be adjusted annually and tied to increases in a Consumer Price Index. Companies would be required to pay these rates and any tips designated by riders to the drivers within a 14-day pay period. Drivers would also be paid 80 percent of any cancellation fee if the person requesting the ride did not cancel before a driver left for pickup. Another change would be establishing specific conditions governing whether any driver could be deactivated by a rideshare company from receiving future links to ride requests. No one could be permanently deactivated unless there was a conviction or stay of adjudication for certain felony offenses. A request for a meeting to reconsider any other deactivation would have to be honored if filed within 15 days. A driver or driver’s beneficiaries could bring a civil action, retroactive to January 2021 or within two years going

forward, against a rideshare company for violating its own written policies or the regulations created by this bill.

**Analysis:** The bill that got to the governor’s desk would intrude in freedom of contract and affirm an entitled cartel of existing taxi and rideshare company drivers, making it very difficult for companies saddled with almost all the risk to hire new drivers, deactivate unsafe drivers or drivers who got poor customer reviews, or even afford to do business in general. It would also expose companies to unfair *ex post facto* civil liability.

**Recommendation:** As sweeping as this bill’s proposed regulations appear, the original version had even more radical restrictions on companies. Nevertheless, LEA favored a NO vote on the bill that passed the Senate 35-32 and the House 69-61. Groups normally allied with this governor, such as disability activists or county administrators, shared concerns that dependent clients would be harmed by greatly increased prices or service suspensions that the companies said would result from this bill and persuaded him to veto the bill. He did, however, issue an executive order creating a committee of vested interests to unite behind alternative legislation for providing better treatment to drivers.



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# SENATE

Pty	Dist	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	2023%	c%
R	35	Abeler, Jim	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	-	+	A	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	58	43
R	29	Anderson, Bruce	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	81
R	31	Bahr, Calvin	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	81
D	25	Boldon, Liz	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-2	4
D	52	Carlson, Jim	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	14
D	59	Champion, Bobby Joe	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	-	2	11
R	48	Coleman, Julia	-	+	+	A	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	71	41
D	49	Cwodzinski, Steve	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	18
R	15	Dahms, Gary	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	A	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	86	53
D	61	Dibble, D. Scott	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	13
R	23	Dornink, Gene	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	87	47
R	22	Draheim, Rich	-	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	77	48
R	20	Drazkowski, Steve	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	86
R	57	Duckworth, Zach	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	74	42
D	60	Dziedzic, Kari	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	15
R	6	Eichorn, Justin	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	54
R	7	Farnsworth, Robert	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	83	83
D	62	Fateh, Omar	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	18
D	18	Frentz, Nick	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	21
R	2	Green, Steve	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	72
R	17	Gruenhagen, Glenn	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	91	71
D	36	Gustafson, Heather	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	3	Hauschild, Grant	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	67	Hawj, Foug	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	17
D	34	Hoffman, John	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	17
R	33	Housley, Karin	+	+	+	A	A	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	72	45
R	13	Howe, Jeff	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	93	56
R	19	Jasinski, John	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	91	49
R	1	Johnson, Mark	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	87	51
D	53	Klein, Matt	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	21
R	28	Koran, Mark	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	91	50
R	32	Kreun, Michael	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	89	89
D	39	Kunesh, Mary	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	21
D	4	Kupec, Robert	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	16	Lang, Andrew	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	+	+	+	+	-	81	49
D	46	Latz, Ron	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	58	Lieske, Bill	-	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
R	37	Limmer, Warren	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	91	73
R	30	Lucero, Eric	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	83
D	50	Mann, Alice	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	5
D	40	Marty, John	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	12
R	27	Mathews, Andrew	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	A	-	84	52

## KEY

**R** – Republican

**D** – Democratic-Farmer-Labor

**I** – Independent

**+** Vote favored by LEA

**-** Vote not favored by LEA

**A** indicates legislator excused, absent, or not voting

### Governor’s Action

**S** - Sign

**\*S** - Sign with line-item vetoes

**V** - Veto

**N** - Not Applicable

**42.4%** = the percent of all legislators’ votes favored by LEA in 2023 scoring

**2023%** = legislator’s 2023 score

**C%** = legislator’s career average LEA score

LEA calculates the voting percentages using votes cast by each legislator and then deducting half a vote for each time that legislator did not cast a vote.

**Honorees** for 2023 scored **95% or higher**

**Honorable Mention** for 2023 scored **90% or higher**

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Corrections made to website if errors are discovered.

## SENATE

Pty	Dist	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	2023%	c%	
D	56	Maye Quade, Erin	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-2	19
D	8	McEwen, Jennifer	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-2	18
R	26	Miller, Jeremy	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	A	+	+	+	+	-	-	75	44
D	47	Mitchell, Nicole	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	63	Mohamed, Zaynab	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	45	Morrison, Kelly	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	9
D	64	Murphy, Erin	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	13
R	24	Nelson, Carla	+	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	77	50
D	66	Oumou Verbeten, Clare	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	65	Pappas, Sandra	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	38	Pha, Susan	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	55	Port, Lindsey	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-2	11
R	54	Pratt, Eric	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	A	+	+	+	-	-	77	53
D	14	Putnam, Aric	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	13
R	11	Rarick, Jason	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	-	93	44
R	9	Rasmusson, Jordan	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	79
D	43	Rest, Ann	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	20
D	41	Seeberger, Judy	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-2	-2
R	5	Utke, Paul	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	91	53
R	21	Weber, Bill	-	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	A	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	78	46
R	10	Wesenberg, Nathan	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
D	42	Westlin, Bonnie	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	12	Westrom, Torrey	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	-	-	91	60
D	51	Wiklund, Melissa	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	16
D	44	Xiong, Tou	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11

## HOUSE

Pty	Dist	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	2023%	c%	
D	45B	Acomb, Patty	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
D	59B	Agbaje, Esther	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
R	20A	Altendorf, Pam	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
R	33A	Anderson, Patti E.	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	A	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	83	83
R	12A	Anderson, Paul H.	A	+	+	A	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	-	-	75	57
R	09A	Backer, Jeff	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	A	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	81	57
D	37B	Bahner, Kristin	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	9
R	54B	Bakeberg, Ben	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
R	16B	Baker, Dave	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	A	+	+	+	+	-	-	81	49
D	40B	Becker-Finn, Jamie	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	23A	Bennett, Peggy	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	75	54
D	55B	Berg, Kaela	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	56A	Bierman, Robert	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	02B	Bliss, Matt	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	A	+	A	+	-	86	68
D	18A	Brand, Jeff	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	12
R	01A	Burkel, John	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	91	77
D	42A	Carroll, Ned	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	47B	Cha, Ethan	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	53A	Clardy, Mary Frances	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	51B	Coulter, Nathan	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	36B	Curran, Brion	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	19A	Daniels, Brian	-	+	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	88	55
R	27B	Daudt, Kurt	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	84	69
R	26B	Davids, Greg	-	A	+	A	+	+	+	+	A	-	+	+	+	A	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	70	63
R	06A	Davis, Ben	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	93	93

# HOUSE

Pty	Dist	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	2023%	c%
R	13A	Demuth, Lisa	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	87	57
R	11A	Dotseth, Jeff	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	87	87
D	50A	Edelson, Heather	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
D	50B	Elkins, Steve	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	36A	Engen, Elliott	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	+	+	+	+	+	A	72	72
D	39B	Feist, Sandra	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	66A	Finke, Leigh	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	44A	Fischer, Peter	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	13
R	21B	Fogelman, Marj	-	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
R	12B	Franson, Mary	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	87	67
D	43A	Frazier, Cedrick	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	18B	Frederick, Luke	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	43B	Freiberg, Mike	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	13
R	58B	Garofalo, Pat	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	89	62
R	17A	Gillman, Dawn	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	89	89
D	62A	Gomez, Aisha	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	12
D	63B	Greenman, Emma	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
R	02A	Grossell, Matt	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	A	88	72
D	53B	Hansen, Rick	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	15
D	55A	Hanson, Jessica	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	-	2	8
R	17B	Harder, Bobbie	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	87	87
D	62B	Hassan, Hodan	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10
R	06B	Heintzeman, Josh	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	62
D	47A	Hemmingsen-Jaeger, A.	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	64A	Her, Kaohly	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10
D	25A	Hicks, Kim	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	33B	Hill, Josiah	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	66B	Hollins, Athena	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	61A	Hornstein, Frank	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10
D	34B	Hortman, Melissa	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	13
D	51A	Howard, Michael	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	41B	Hudella, Shane	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	-	+	+	+	+	-	71	71
R	30A	Hudson, Walter	-	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
D	56B	Huot, John	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
D	65A	Hussein, Samakab	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	07A	Igo, Spencer	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	80	68
R	20B	Jacob, Steven	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	87	87
R	28A	Johnson, Brian	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	89	62
D	60A	Jordan, Sydney	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	04B	Joy, Jim	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
D	04A	Keeler, Heather	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
R	01B	Kiel, Debra	A	+	+	+	A	+	A	A	+	A	+	A	A	+	A	-	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	47	57
D	42B	Klevorn, Ginny	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	05A	Knudsen, Krista	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	87	87
D	39A	Koegel, Erin	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	16
D	49B	Kotzya-Witthuhn, Carlie	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
D	08B	Kozlowski, Alicia	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	57A	Koznick, Jon	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	93	61
D	46A	Kraft, Larry	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	10A	Kresha, Ron	-	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	-	78	54
D	59A	Lee, Fue	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	19
D	67A	Lee, Liz	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	24B	Liebling, Tina	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	15
D	44B	Lillie, Leon	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
D	07B	Lislegard, Dave	+	-	-	-	A	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	14
D	61B	Long, Jamie	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11



# HOUSE

Pty	Dist	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	2023%	c%
R	29A	McDonald, Joe	-	+	+	+	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	88	64
R	27A	Mekeland, Shane	-	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	93	84
D	40A	Moller, Kelly	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	-	-	-	-	A	-	A	-	-	-	-	-5	9
R	23B	Mueller, Patricia	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	78	65
R	09B	Murphy, Tom	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	91
R	45A	Myers, Andrew	+	+	+	-	+	A	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	71	71
R	34A	Nadeau, Danny	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	A	-	+	+	+	+	-	71	71
R	48A	Nash, Jim	-	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	+	+	+	+	+	-	81	65
D	38A	Nelson, Michael	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	15
R	11B	Nelson, Nathan	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	87	60
R	28B	Neu Brindley, Anne	-	+	+	-	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	84	72
D	35B	Newton, Jerry	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	14
R	31A	Niska, Harry	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	96
D	60B	Noor, Mohamud	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
D	32B	Norris, Matt	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	30B	Novotny, Paul	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	87	72
R	13B	O'Driscoll, Tim	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	59
R	22A	Olson, Bjorn	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	87	70
D	08A	Olson, Liz	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	18
R	29B	O'Neill, Marion	-	+	+	A	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	-	A	A	+	+	+	+	+	78	63
D	26A	Pelowski, Gene	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	30
D	65B	Perez-Vega, Maria Isa	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	14A	Perryman, Bernie	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	87	87
R	19B	Petersburg, John	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	83	51
R	22B	Pfarr, Brian	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	74
D	64B	Pinto, Dave	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	19
D	49A	Pryor, Laurie	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	19
D	58A	Pursell, Kristi	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	24A	Quam, Duane	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	86	73
D	48B	Rehm, Lucy	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	52A	Reyer, Liz	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	-	-	-	-	-	2	8
D	52B	Richardson, Ruth	+	-	-	-	-	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	10
R	37A	Robbins, Kristin	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	83	67
R	21A	Schomacker, Joe	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	91	58
R	10B	Schultz, Isaac	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	96	96
R	31B	Scott, Peggy	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	69
D	63A	Sencer-Mura, Samantha	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
R	03A	Skraba, Roger	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	70	70
D	25B	Smith, Andy	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
D	35A	Stephenson, Zack	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	15A	Swedzinski, Chris	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	93	64
D	54A	Tabke, Brad	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	12
R	15B	Torkelson, Paul	-	+	+	A	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	91	62
R	16A	Urdahl, Dean	-	+	+	A	A	+	+	+	A	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	-	+	+	+	+	-	65	51
D	38B	Vang, Samantha	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
R	32A	West, Nolan	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	-	+	+	+	+	-	80	57
R	05B	Wiener, Mike	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	93	93
R	41A	Wiens, Mark	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	A	-	+	+	+	+	-	80	80
R	57B	Witte, Jeff	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	-	A	-	+	+	+	+	+	86	86
D	14B	Wolgammott, Dan	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
D	67B	Xiong, Jay	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	12
D	46B	Youakim, Cheryl	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	20
R	03B	Zeleznikar, Natalie	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	83	83

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Walz, Tim	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	V	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S

## 9. Renewable Energy Mandates

### HF7. Rep. Long. [SF4. Sen. Frentz.]

**Summary:** This bill modifies electric utility renewable energy standard obligations. It exempts or streamlines approval processes for wind and solar investments. The bill requires Minnesota to be 100 percent carbon free by 2040. Amendments to lift the moratorium on the construction of nuclear plants were defeated and this bill keeps the moratorium in place. As for hydroelectric sources, only existing large hydroelectric plants can be counted toward the renewable percentage mandates. This bill includes a provision allowing utilities to appeal to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for temporary delays in compliance. Any utility that requests a delay in implementation of a standard must file a compliance plan when making the request. The PUC is required to evaluate impacts on environmental justice and to quantify costs associated with each method of energy transmission by relying on federal estimates of the Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases. The bill allows utilities to recover approved renewable investments, primarily for solar and wind, and their ongoing operating costs plus a rate of return from their customers.

**Analysis:** The North American Electric Reliability Corporation warned that the grid supplying power to Minnesotans was at the highest high risk of rolling blackouts in the country, because reliable coal, nuclear, and natural gas plants have been shut down without enough reliable capacity being built to replace them. Legislators rejected the underlying science of energy generation and storage and ignored the issues with wind and solar. Even existing carbon-free nuclear power plants are on the chopping block and the moratorium for building new nuclear power plants remains in place.

This bill, which was only vetted by one policy committee despite its massive impact on various parts of the economy, forces huge investments in an energy infrastructure destined to be unreliable. High-cost unreliable energy creates financial burdens for the middle and lower economic classes. It creates burdens on our economy that will lower the standard of living for Minnesotans. To the degree renewables have been effective, it is because we have had reliable energy sources during peak demand when the wind wasn't blowing, or the sun wasn't shining. With this legislation Minnesotans suffer the cost of a major investment in energy production and delivery over the next 20 years that produces less efficient and less reliable energy.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote. There may be no better example of the indirect taxation of citizens. Legislators pretend they are not taxing us for this carbon-free energy mandate. This is a reckless, rushed, irresponsible bill being propagandized as courageously addressing climate change, but without any objective way to measure impact on climate, and more importantly excluding proven energy sources without any reliable replacement for meeting baseload demand. This is irrational ideology, not science and it will weaken the economy that produces food and shelter for Minnesotans. The bill passed the Senate 34-33, the House 70-60, and was signed into law by the governor.

## 10. Environmental Trust Fund Constitutional Amendment

### HF1900. Rep. Hollins. [SF2404. Sen. Hawj.]

**Summary:** This bill authorizes a constitutional amendment submitted to the voters that extends until 2050 the environmental trust fund contributions from lottery proceeds expiring in 2025. It creates a Community Grant Advisory Council. Community organizations can receive grants from a new 1.5 percent allotment, or about \$20 million in 2025. The council must include two members of the Ojibwe Tribe, two members of the Dakota Tribe, and four other members who identify as members of communities of color. Grants can be used to fund adversely impacted communities and sponsor environmental awareness programs. These grants cannot be made to the Department of Natural Resources, whose commissioner appoints the council members.

**Analysis:** This bill provides a fund for government spending that is insulated from the general fund and appropriations, creating a steady stream of revenue for government agencies and minority community organizations, independent of need. The fund is created by a Constitutional Amendment, circumventing the democratic process of having the legislature in control of financial appropriations. The Community Grant Advisory Council will steer a portion of the proceeds to minority groups rather than the general population, containing built-in ethnic and racial discrimination. The new community grant program appears to be a \$20 million annual slush fund for minority activist groups.

**Recommendation:** LEA opposed the original constitutional amendments to fund the environment because it believes the purpose of a constitution is to provide the framework for government processes and not merely a tool that circumvents them. In a system of representative government, citizens need to hold their legislators accountable for how state money is spent, and not allow the government to find autonomous sources of funding that escape accountability. This constitutional amendment suffers from the additional problems of not informing voters of changes being made to the trust fund, reinforcing racial and ethnic divisions. LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed 36-29 in the Senate, 89-41 in the House, and was signed by the governor.

## 11. Omnibus Tax Finance and Policy

### HF1938. Rep. Gomez. [SF1811. Sen. Rest.]

**Summary:** This bill raises taxes by \$2.2 billion and increases spending via the tax code by approximately \$5 billion. It expands the video feature prohibitions of electronic pull-tabs (E-Tabs) and establishes price caps on video developers at 25 percent of net receipts of the respective game. (Pull-tabs provide funding for non-profits to support charities, veterans, mothers, and youth activities). It puts some year-to-year caps on city property tax increases and eliminates property taxes for some nonprofits while appropriating an \$80,000 increase in both local government aid and county program aid. It allows a 100 percent Social Security subtraction for married and single taxpayers with adjusted gross incomes up to \$100,000 and

\$78,000 respectively. The bill establishes a new public pension subtraction that is limited to \$25,000 and phased out in the same manner as the Social Security subtraction. It creates a one-time surplus rebate of \$260 per filer plus \$260 per dependent for up to three dependents. It expands the working family credit for incomes up to \$35,000. It increases the child credit. A net investment income tax is created.

**Analysis:** Legislators openly stated that they could not estimate the decrease in E-Tab gaming though they acknowledged it could be as much as 90 percent from current levels. The new restrictions went far beyond anything dictated by the Appeals Court ruling, which was narrowly focused. It is not clear if legislation was even required.

This bill expands the complexity of taxes and fees. It expands the long list of tax expenditures (credits and deductions) embedded in the income tax, property tax, and sales and use tax statutes. These are subsidies that avoid the normal appropriation process touching everything from film making to solar companies to a handful of specific property exemptions, including an elderly care facility in Duluth and property owned by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.

Tax expenditures are commonly used to provide specific and sometimes large tax loopholes for the well-connected as well as smaller and broader tax exemptions for voters that have clout by voting as a block. Omnibus tax bills are particularly susceptible to corruption in part because of the different types of payments such as those noted above. Many of the provisions of this bill would not have passed had they been single-subject bills.

**Recommendation:** Tax laws should be designed with the single purpose of raising the needed funds for government operations and not loaded with spending masquerading as tax reductions. Once passed, perhaps an argument can be made that the best way to facilitate these subsidy payments is via the tax code, but expenditures should be approved via the appropriation process. Regarding the significant change in E-Tab restrictions, it is reckless to make legislation when the impact can be estimated no more narrowly than between 5 and 90 percent of lost revenues. LEA favored a NO Vote. The bill passed the Senate 34-33, the House 69-63, and was signed into law by the governor.

## 12. Omnibus State Government Finance and Policy

### HF1830. Rep. Klevorn. [SF1426. Sen. E. Murphy.]

**Summary:** This 296-page bill, which funds the legislature's own operations, state constitutional offices, and many other state agencies, spent 15 percent more than the comparable bill passed for the last biennial budget, and raised the overall state budget reserve account maximum from \$2.38 billion to \$2.85 billion. Among the appropriations made were subsidies for public radio and public TV companies and associations, including \$1.3 million earmarked to "provide a diverse community radio news service." Approximately \$170 million was added to supplement teacher retirement funds and those of other public employees.

The bill covered much more than appropriations. It contained eight separate articles and created 21 new statutes, many of them impacting balance of powers, while repealing 24 statutes and

modifying over 200 others. The definition of a "legislative day" will be changed in 2025, as will the starting date for odd-year sessions. Legislative bodies and commissions can secure funding even if the governor line-item-vetoes their budgets. A cap for appointees' pay being no more than 133 percent of the governor's salary was removed, and the governor's office was given more discretion in spending and retaining appropriations made to that office. The Compensation Council will have exclusive authority to set salaries for state constitutional officers and agency heads. Each agency's affirmative-action plan must have a section covering access for people with disabilities. Sustainable Building 2030 energy standards must be used for state construction or major renovation projects. Public-employee collective bargaining agreements will no longer require legislative ratification, and preparations will be made for expanding collective bargaining for all legislative staff. Executive appointees requiring confirmation can only be rejected within 60 legislative days of appointment. The Attorney General will authorize disbursements from a new Consumer Litigation Fund. Licenses will be required for people classified as "hair technicians." There will be new procedures for reviewing nonprofit grant or business subsidy recipients above a certain level. Minnesota will be getting a new state seal and state flag, to be decided by the State Emblem Redesign Commission. A 16-member State Council on LGBTQIA2S+ Minnesotans is created, funded, and given duties. These are just some of the policy changes made by this bill.

Though a separate bill made election policy changes, many more changes were in this bill. It has a prohibition on anyone wearing identifiable campaign logos or slogans near polling places. The thresholds required to qualify for major political party status were changed, and access to presidential-primary party-affiliation lists was further restricted. Most laws governing precinct caucus participation were repealed. Minnesota will join the interstate compact agreeing to cast electoral votes based on who won the national popular vote once enough states join the compact. Cast vote records will be classified as nonpublic. Counties can choose to implement 18-day early-voting periods and eliminate in-person absentee voting during that time. Accepted absentee ballot envelopes can be opened 19 days before election day, and people are given the right to be absent from work for early voting just as for election-day voting. Once a county uses electronic voting, it must continue to use it for all state elections in the future. Ballots and voting instructions must be available in more languages. "Electioneering" communications are more regulated, and people who "intimidate" or "interfere" with election officials are subject to civil and criminal penalties. Poll challengers can no longer ask a prospective voter about eligibility, even in the presence of an election judge, and a county auditor or municipal clerk is given discretion to remove any precinct election official. Colleges must periodically supply voter-registration forms and student resident voting lists and have a designated campus vote coordinator. Felons officially still incarcerated but on home monitoring or work release will be able to vote. The Secretary of State must conduct a study and report on the possibility of implementing ranked-choice-voting statewide.

**Analysis:** Perhaps there are a few good sections in this bill, but

they are far outweighed by a lot of bad policies that erode balance of power between the branches as well as between elected and unelected authorities. Then of course there is the problem of all these unrelated policies being lumped into one bill. Considering occupational licenses, salary changes, and a host of election-law changes in one bill mocks the constitution's single-subject rule.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote on the bill that passed the Senate 34-31, the House 69-62, and was signed into law.

### 13. Election Omnibus Bill

#### HF3. Rep. Greenman. [SF3. Sen. Boldon.]

**Summary:** The changes this bill makes to current election law include permitting 16-year-olds to preregister to vote, creating a permanent automatic absentee ballot application, and changing campaign finance laws (including prohibiting contributions to PACs, candidates, or independent expenditures from publicly traded corporations with 5 percent of foreign shareholders). Corporations that make a contribution or expenditure must submit a certification to the Campaign Finance Board that it was not foreign influenced as of the date the contribution or expenditure was made.

**Analysis:** The new election laws prioritize ease of voting over election integrity. Legislators failed to address basic integrity processes related to voter rolls, voter ID, provisional ballots, and ballot harvesting. The changes made will register voters automatically through driver's license renewal and other state programs. Every form completed for the state is also a voter registration form. Schools are required to support the pre-registration of 16-year-olds. Offering a "permanent" absentee ballot to a resident for a mere convenience will create chaos when the intended recipient is no longer there or incapable of voting, e.g., infirm relatives. Absentee ballots will be automatically sent out to people on the "permanent" list, leading to more ballots vulnerable to theft or fraud circulating in unsecured mailboxes.

Existing law prohibits coercion of voters, but this bill creates a definition of intimidation that includes a "feeling" of intimidation without any intent. It prohibits "false" information from being shared during political campaigns.

It expands the reach of the Campaign Finance Board to determine the line between regulated political speech and free speech. It will put the practice of free speech at risk via self-censorship.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 34-33, the House 70-57, and was signed into law.

### 14. Felon Voting Rights Expanded

#### HF28. Rep. Frazier. [SF26. Sen. Champion.]

**Summary:** This bill expands voting rights to any felon no longer incarcerated, regardless of the sentence being completed. The Secretary of State (SOS) office is tasked with creating a universally available, updated guide to felon voting rights, and the voter signature receipt and Voter's Bill of Rights poster at each polling place needs to be updated to reflect the changes. The chief of each correctional facility must designate an official within the facility to have

responsibility for giving a notice of restoration and a voter registration application to each felon upon release from incarceration. The probation officer for any felon still under court supervision while on probation must also provide the notice and application.

**Analysis:** The MN Constitution has a section about felons not being allowed to vote "unless restored to civil rights" that may conflict with this legislation. Changes to our constitution require the legislature to pass an act proposing amendment to the constitution, which is then voted on by all the citizens voting at an election once the SOS has prepared the language for the ballot referendum. Since the legislature did not do that with this bill, it is being legally challenged. Also, since those convicted of a felony lose other civil rights, does the constitution mean that all civil rights need to be restored together? Probation is a period-of-court-supervision alternative to incarceration, requiring probationers to meet certain conditions (attending meetings, observing restrictions on travel and weapons possession, paying restitution, etc.); legislative restoration of the civil right to vote during this time would improperly dilute the supervision. Removing the rights of felons to vote while they are still serving their sentence helps protect all of us from the government being influenced by those who have a history of severely undermining the safety and welfare of the community.

It is inappropriate to add election responsibilities to otherwise unrelated state employees. This is particularly unwise because non-election employees should not be expected to know the election law. It is unjust when no comparable effort is made to facilitate voting by non-felon classes of entrepreneurs or churchgoers. Victims of felons may have been deprived of all rights, including the right to life, yet the felons who did it will be able to vote as soon as they are not physically in prison. Felons can and should participate in society in myriad ways other than voting, including fulfilling family responsibilities, engaging in productive labor, volunteering in the community, even working for a political campaign or organization.

**Recommendation:** Constitutionally defined voter rights should be changed only by constitutional amendments. To place an extra value on more felons voting is unjust and socially irresponsible. Concerns about too many acts being felonies or excessive probation periods can be and are addressed by other bills. Therefore, LEA favored a NO vote on this bill that passed the Senate 35-30, the House 72-58, and was signed into law.

### 15. Omnibus Judiciary and Public Safety

#### SF2909. Sen. Latz. [HF2890. Rep. Moller.]

**Summary:** This 520-page bill funds the Department of Public Safety and the judiciary branch, while also modifying over 270 existing statutes and adding or repealing over 50 others. It establishes crimes of carjacking and organized retail theft. It creates several new bureaucracies, including an Office of Restorative Practices. It orders the Commissioner of Corrections to establish an Earned Incentive Release Credit system that can significantly reduce the sentences of many prisoners if they participate in rehabilitation programs. Prosecutors are also allowed to initiate reductions in sentences after the courts have imposed them. It sets new caps on lengths of

probation for many crimes, and applies the caps retroactively to those already sentenced. It prohibits the state from contracting with the private sector for prisons, including private prisons run by state employees. It directs the Department of Human Rights to track bias incidents and publish a report including recommendations for policy changes that could prevent such incidents. It prohibits police officers from associating with unapproved groups, especially those groups that may be critical of the government.

The bill expands the list of potential biases that add penalties beyond the sentence guidelines for various crimes. In the case of felony assault, it enables additional penalties of up to 25 percent. Added to the existing list of classes protected against potential biases are gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, and national origin. It struck language in the definition of the protected class of sexual orientation which specified that sexual orientation does not mean a physical or sexual attachment to children by an adult.

The bill includes a process for issuing Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs). These provisions are often referred to as red flag laws. A family member, current or former spouse, roommate, mental health provider, or law enforcement official can petition a judge to remove firearms from someone who poses a significant danger of harming others or is at risk of suicide. Another provision extends background check requirements to private transfers of pistols and semi-automatic military-style assault weapons.

**Analysis:** Using the power of government to track incidences of bias speech borders on an infringement of the First Amendment, especially when the bill includes an expectation that the state will use its power to change the minds of people using unapproved speech. Restricting who police officers can associate with is completely at odds with the First Amendment's protection of the right of association.

Arbitrary increases for fines and prison terms based on perceived biases are indefensible. Motivation is always a challenge to prove and motivation that is based on bias is often just speculative. Bias penalties suggest that violent criminals are typically a reasonable bunch and that the injuries one receives from a felony assault heal more quickly if the assailant had unbiased reasons for the assault. Lawbreakers should be fined or go to prison for the crime committed.

Regarding red flag laws, provisions of this bill make it easy to infringe on the Second Amendment right to own firearms and up to the whims of a judge to get one's rights reinstated. Experience in other states demonstrates that ERPOs are ripe for abuse. Grudge holders will weaponize the law for revenge. A red flag law empowers law enforcement to take your property, possibly without due process, and kill you if you resist.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 34-33, the House 69-63, and was signed into law.

## 16. Expansive Race Definition Created

### HF37. Rep. Agbaje. [SF44. Sen. Champion.]

**Summary:** This bill adds to the MN Human Rights Act, which deals with discrimination, a definition of race as being "inclusive of

traits associated with race, including but not limited to hair texture and hair styles such as braids, locs and twists."

**Analysis:** The bill creates an expansive definition of an existing protected class. It opens avenues for frivolous lawsuits against businesses, schools, and any organization that makes decisions involving people. The thrust of the bill was natural hair styles, but the potential of courts to expand natural traits to include cultural styles and perhaps language seems plausible.

**Recommendation:** Adding the language "but not limited to" contradicts the original purpose of the bill which authors claimed was clarity. LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed 45-19 in the Senate, 111-19 in the House, and was signed into law by the governor.

## 17. Equal Rights Amendment Resolution

### HF197. Rep. Bahner. [SF47. Sen. Pappas.]

**Summary:** This resolution urges Congress to pass a resolution stating that ratification requirements have been met to add this Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

*"Section 1:* Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

*Section 2:* The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

*Section 3:* This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

It also contains 19 "Whereas" statements to support the resolution.

**Analysis:** When Congress submitted the original ERA to the states in 1972, it established a seven-year window (which it later extended by three years) to obtain support from 38 states necessary for ratification. Thirty-five states (including MN) ratified it, but then five rescinded their support. Since 2017, three more states have signed on to support it, leading pro-ERA activists to argue it should be considered ratified, ignoring the rescissions of five states and the Congressional ratification deadlines. This bill would have Minnesota side with those activists on this contentious legal question.

More troublingly, the "Whereas" statements include the narrative that the ERA will "advance gender justice" for "gender expansive individuals," demonstrating an intent to request that Congress pass ERA provisions that could be harmful to many women. "Gender identity" is a psychological identity and not the biological sex determined at conception. The attempt to impose gender identity on biological sex (1) threatens the safety and privacy of women in sex-segregated facilities, (2) undermines the integrity of women's sports competitions, and (3) imperils the reproductive capability of youths through irreversible "gender-care" treatments.

LEA believes the wording of this resolution could be harmful to women's rights, potentially making the ERA a vehicle for the oppression of women.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote. It passed the Senate 42-25, the House 70-51, and was signed by the governor.

## 18. Continuing COVID Benefits Eligibility

### SF2265. Sen. Wiklund. [HF2286. Rep. Noor.]

**Summary:** During the COVID Public Health Emergency, states were initially required to ignore eligibility requirements for anyone applying for or receiving Medicaid, Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare. This bill continues the rules under COVID and allows people to receive taxpayer-funded entitlements up to an additional 1-2 years without proof of qualification, verification of assets or income.

**Analysis:** Before COVID, 70 million people were on Medicaid nationwide. This ballooned to 93 million (an increase of 30 percent) under COVID when states removed income and asset verification checks. The federal government has given states a year to perform eligibility checks, including periodic data matching which compares a recipient's Social Security number with federal wage withholdings. This bill grants the Commissioner of Health permission to ignore their obligation to recover unpaid MinnesotaCare premiums from taxpayer-subsidized subscribers.

The state's Health and Human Services budget increased under COVID and now the federal government is making their cuts, leaving the state legislature responsible for covering people who should not have qualified for the programs, and suspending payments to insurance companies who were being paid for nonexistent subscribers. Medicaid fraud was a serious issue prior to COVID. In addition to ineligible recipients receiving taxpayer funded care, taxpayers were also paying Blue Cross and other large insurance providers a fixed monthly rate for subscribers who may not exist, or people who applied for benefits but have moved on to private insurance and never cancelled medical assistance. This fraud grew and went unchecked for three years. The Minnesota legislature failed to establish oversight for up to two more years.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 46-18, the House 82-44, and was signed into law.

## 19. Omnibus Transportation Finance and Policy

### HF2887. Rep. Hornstein. [SF3157. Sen. Dibble.]

**Summary:** This bill appropriates over \$7.8 billion for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Included in this amount is \$195 million for a Northern Lights Minneapolis-to-Duluth passenger rail project that would also upgrade the Coon Rapids rail station and expand several Amtrak rail services. The Met Council receives over \$230 million, including \$50 million for Hennepin County expanding the Blue Line light rail northward from downtown Minneapolis. \$580 million is appropriated to the Department of Public Safety, including \$37.9 million earmarked for Capitol Security. The bill also authorizes almost \$600 million from the Trunk Highway Fund for transportation projects.

Fees for license tabs, driver's licenses, and other identification cards are being increased, as is the motor vehicle excise tax. The gas tax rates will now be subject to an increase in the Minnesota Construction Cost Index every year, though no decrease would be allowed if costs decrease. A new Regional Transportation sales and

use tax of 0.75 percent will be imposed within the seven-county Twin Cities metro area, with over 80 percent of collected revenues going to the Met Council for various transit projects and operations. Sellers are required to remit a retail delivery fee of 50 cents on transactions of \$100 or more to the Minnesota Department of Revenue. Some small businesses are exempt from collection, and some items such as food and medicine are exempt from having the fee imposed. A sizable but means-tested rebate for purchasers of electric-assisted bicycles is created.

In addition to adjusting transportation taxes and expenditures, there are new programs, task forces and many other policy changes included in this bill. Prior to the inclusion of any capacity-expansion projects in a state or metro transportation improvement program, there must be a greenhouse gas emissions impact assessment. If the project does not meet the emissions or vehicle-miles-traveled targets, the project must be rejected, revised to meet the targets, or offset with localized impact mitigation (parking reduction, transit expansion, prairie restoration, etc.). The Metropolitan Airports Commission must submit a climate mitigation and adaptation report to the legislature, including an evaluation of whether state-imposed emissions and waste-reduction targets are being met, as well as a plan and timeline for a potential ban on single-use plastic water bottles. The ban on drivers holding cell phones was expanded to include holding a phone even if it is in voice-activation mode. The Department of Public Safety must submit a report to the legislature identifying a process for using traffic-safety camera data to mail citations to vehicle owners and make recommendations regarding the implementation of mailed traffic citations.

The Met Council must conduct an 18-month Transit Fare Elimination Pilot Program on two regular-route metro bus lines and submit a follow-up report evaluating its effects upon ridership, travel time, service equity, and rider experience. The Met Council must also deploy social-services teams to do on-site interventions with homeless riders or riders exhibiting behavioral disorders, adopt a rider Code of Conduct, and deploy other personnel who could educate riders about the code and issue citations or ban riders for code violations. A 17-member Metropolitan Governance Task Force is established to study reforms and make recommendations on them, including election of Met Council members, creation of a council of governments to replace the Met Council, and re-portioning Met Council duties to state agencies and local units of government. The MNDOT commissioner is to collaborate with the Met Council for assessing the prospects of extending the Northstar commuter rail line to St. Cloud and submit a report with the results of that assessment.

**Analysis:** Transit rider safety and usage have declined, but this bill increases taxes and spends lavishly to expand transit projects, when the efforts to improve rider safety are yet to be realized and the need for more transit yet to be demonstrated. At the same time, the climate-change extremists make it more difficult to expand vehicle capacity on roadways and put things unrelated to transportation such as bans on water bottles at airports into the bill. Government greed was also on display, raising the gas tax, many types of license fees, and even creating a retail delivery fee and metro sales tax during

a time of great budgetary surplus. This greed will impose more costs on taxpayers and make the state less hospitable for attracting or growing businesses. At the very least, the funding for the priority transportation projects should have been voted on separately from all the tax and other policy changes.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote on the bill that passed the Senate 34-32, the House 69-61, and became law.

## 20. Omnibus Housing

### HF2335. Rep. Howard. [SF2566. Sen. Port.]

**Summary:** This bill appropriates \$1.065 billion to the MN Housing Finance Agency. As part of this budget, the agency is also authorized to establish a “special purpose credit program” for disadvantaged groups to “address the effects of historic and current [housing] credit discrimination.” Other money included in this total is reserved for particular programs, groups, or nonprofit organizations. \$5 million is for a grant to Urban Homeworks to expand affordable housing initiatives in Minneapolis neighborhoods. \$6 million is for a grant to Build Wealth MN to provide affordable mortgage financing for “underserved communities of color” households. \$65.5 million is for the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program, \$200 million for the Housing Infrastructure Program, and \$6.425 million of Challenge Program Funding is set aside for housing projects for American Indians.

In addition to the money appropriated from the general fund, the bill requires the Met Council to impose a new 0.25 percent retail sales tax within its seven-county metro area. 50 percent of revenues collected will be transferred to a metro county housing assistance account, 25 percent to a metro city housing assistance account, and 25 percent to a state rent assistance account.

**Analysis:** The government has never been the best provider or manager of housing, but our lawmakers foolishly insist on the government being a larger player in the housing market. Also troubling is the emphasis and earmarking of assistance to certain racial and ethnic groups rather than needy individuals and families, going so far as to authorize the state to start a housing credit “reparations” program to address historical discrimination. Finally, in a time of historically large state budget surplus, it is irresponsible to impose a new dedicated tax creating a slush fund for housing programs insulated from the legislature’s budgeting decisions.

**Recommendation:** LEA favored a NO vote on the bill that passed the Senate 34-32, the House 70-61, and became law.

## 21. Omnibus Education Finance and Policy

### HF2497. Rep. Youakim. [SF2684. Sen. Kunesh.]

**Summary:** This omnibus bill contains appropriations for \$23.2 billion of the E-12 biennial education budget. Overall, the approved \$24.3 billion (including other appropriations in different bills) is a 20 percent increase over the previous biennium. Included in this is a 4 percent increase in per-pupil allocation in 2024 and a 2 percent increase in 2025, with automatic inflationary adjustments (in a range of 2-3 percent) annually, beginning in 2026. Less than 70

percent of this budget goes to general education aid; the rest goes to many other programs. The bill also permits one-time extensions of existing school district levies without voter approval for up to 10 years.

The specific policy provisions include mandates in the following areas: rest room policies, opioid abuse treatment, unemployment coverage for seasonal hourly school district employees, ethnic studies courses and dictates on hiring of teachers based on race, required Holocaust and genocide studies, team/mascot names, “reasonable force” restrictions on prone restraint, training and drills for school violence prevention, literacy and general academic standards, additional support personnel (nurses, librarians, etc.), teacher licensing, charter schools, holiday observance, and special education.

**Analysis:** With respect to the funding changes, this bill represents exploitation of the state surplus to establish new inflated baseline funding that will likely result in further tax burden in future years for MN residents. The bill heaps onerous amounts of state oversight onto an already overburdened public education system, while wasting money on more bloated administrative bureaucracy and encouraging seasonal school employees to decline lower-paying summer jobs.

Numerous policy provisions wrongfully inserted into this budget represent dictates from the state on matters better left to local school boards and districts. Many other dictates propagate corrosive ideological transformation. Promoting the hiring of teachers based on racial characteristics is an inherently racist practice. Insistence on ethnic studies and associated instruction on systemic racism have little value in today’s America and only serve to foster societal division. Particularly egregious in new curriculum requirements is the implied conflation of WWII Holocaust teaching with purported Native American “genocide” in the founding of America. This kind of mandate only furthers cultural Marxist objectives aimed at teaching children to hate America and its founding. Regarding the construction of single-user, gender-neutral rest rooms, there is nothing objectionable, per se. What is troubling is the implicit affirmation of radical gender ideology in various related policies.

Two policies from this bill may not last until 2024. One is the suspended implementation of the provision that faith-based colleges can’t require the signing of a statement of faith from students in a post-secondary enrollment options program, which is being legally challenged as violating freedom of religion. The other is the prohibition on using prone restraint except “to prevent imminent bodily harm or death”, possibly even by law enforcement deployed as school resource officers, resulting in many districts losing them.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 35-32, the House 70-62, and was signed into law.





## 2023 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

### 22. Omnibus Higher Education Finance and Policy

#### HF2073. Rep. Pelowski. [SF2075. Sen. Fateh.]

**Summary:** This bill includes funding for existing and new programs targeting various aspects of higher education, and supports programs like childcare for dependents of students. It appropriates \$776 Million to the Office of Higher Ed, a 30 percent increase over the previous budget. For students with a family adjusted gross income below \$80k, The North Star Promise shifts 100 percent of tuition (minus scholarships and grants) to all taxpayers of the State. Additional cash payments above tuition will also be made under the North Star Promise, similar to Pell Grants.

**Analysis:** The bill attempts to address the ever-changing employee shortages by providing grants or incentives for students to shift their focus to meet the short-term demands of specific skills or industries.

Minnesota's enrollment at colleges and universities peaked in 2010 at 309,000 students. It has since dropped 30 percent to 208,000 in a steady trend both pre- and post-COVID. Instead of right-sizing public colleges and universities or adjusting their budgets to attract students with lower tuition, this bill seeks to remedy the drop in demand by giving it away for "free" to tens of thousands of people while the University of Minnesota increases its tuition.

For families who make over \$80k a year with children headed to college, there will be a \$25k per child incentive to drop hours or shift to part-time work in order to land below the hard, arbitrary income threshold between 0 percent (\$80,000) and 100 percent (\$79,999.99) income limits under the North Star Promise.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 34-30, the House 69-62, and was signed into law.

### 23. Bonding Despite \$17.5 Billion Surplus

#### HF669. Rep. F. Lee. [SF676. Sen. Pappas.]

**Summary:** This bill borrows \$1.5 billion for various projects through bonding. Among the projects authorized for bonding were \$152 million for local roads and bridges, \$72 million for Bus Rapid Transit, \$317 million for the U of M and MNSCU, \$78 million for the Hastings Veterans Home Campus Upgrade, \$12 million for Giants Ridge Recreation Area, and \$48 million for the Dept. of Employment and Economic Development to distribute in grants to earmarked economic development projects.

**Analysis:** A bonding bill is meant to have a core of capital-improvement projects for state-owned assets, such as major roads and buildings, which follow a specific funding formula based on real need and without a prejudice of politics. These could have been paid for with cash, reducing the surplus for the spending frenzy elsewhere in government. In order to commit taxpayers to more debt (bonding), a supermajority is constitutionally required. When bonding is done in one large omnibus bill the process gets corrupted, buying votes through the handing out of "discretionary" funds for local roads and economic-development projects. With a historically large budget surplus, there was no reason to place the taxpayers into more debt.

**Recommendation:** The LEA favored a NO vote. The bill passed the Senate 56-11, the House 97-35, and was signed into law.