

State Representative Peggy Scott

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NEWS COLUMN EMAIL UPDATE

Greetings from the Capitol,

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1. Ham Lake Snow Bowl

This Saturday, the 7th, is the Third Annual Ham Lake Snow Bowl sponsored by the Ham Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. They have a lot of events planned, including Sled Dog Rides, Helicopter Rides, a Vintage Snowmobile Expo, a Snow Sculpture Contest, a Frisbee Golf Tournament, and many more! You can check out <http://www.hamlakecc.org/snowbowl.htm> for more information on the Snow Bowl. I'll be there on Saturday and I look forward to seeing you there!

2. Share Your Thoughts on the Budget

Recently, a website has been developed to seek your input into the state budgeting process. The website is called Minnesota Budget Solutions. Here's the address: www.mnbudgetsolutions.com

I hope you will take a moment to visit. In addition to seeking people's input, you will find an interactive budget calculator, articles discussing why and how the government needs to live within its means, and eventually there will be discussion from state experts. Take a look when you have some free time, and as always, let me know your thoughts and suggestions.

3. Balancing the Budget

The first few months of session is held mainly in committee meetings. The committees discuss and debate the bills before they go to the House Floor. This past week in committee we have had a number of discussions on the budget deficit. Because the legislature must balance the budget and appropriate funding for all state agencies this year this topic is the common theme.

With the Governor's budget plan out committees have been reviewing that plan. There hasn't been any plan put forth by the Majority in the Legislature. It's assumed they'll wait until budget Forecast comes out in early March before they offer their plan. That forecast will likely project a deficit of \$6 billion, and possibly more.

Trying to balance the budget with that much of a hole means there will be some budget reductions. Just as families must reduce their spending to meet their income levels, that's what the state must do as well. The Governor's plan tries to minimize the pain, so no single area has an excessive burden. I think it's a good plan. There are others

who say this plan is too harsh. While they are entitled to their opinion, I would like to see their proposal. It's easy to offer criticisms, but they mean nothing unless you also offer a plan.

4. Stay up-to-date

As we move forward this session I encourage everyone to keep up-to-date with what is happening at the Capitol. On my House website, www.house.mn/49A, you can find my latest Capitol Comments. You can listen to my thoughts on current issues by downloading my podcast. You can also listen to my podcast in iTunes by searching "Rep. Peggy Scott" in the iTunes Store.

The non-partisan House Information also puts out a weekly legislative recap, called Session Weekly. Each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week. They also produce Session Daily, which is an online news service updated every day during session and when news from the House warrants. You can find more information about them by visiting their page at <http://www.house.mn/hinfo/hinfo.asp>

And lastly I would encourage you to contact me on any legislative issue or questions you may have. You can reach me via email at rep.peggy.scott@house.mn, by phone at (651) 296-4231, or by U.S. Mail at Rep. Peggy Scott, 225 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,
Peggy