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For Immediate Release

Posted: 2/13/2009

LETTER TO THE EDITOR EMAIL UPDATE

Greetings from the Capitol,

This week I announced my Town Hall Meetings and the release of my 2009 Legislative Survey. I've also included some information on a few bills I thought you may be interested in.

In this issue:

1. Town Hall Meeting and Survey
2. Legislative Budget Hearing
3. Statewide Fraud Prevention Program
4. Voter ID Bill Voted Down

1. Town Hall Meeting and Survey

Coming up on Saturday February 21 I will be hosting my first Town Hall Meeting.

The meeting will take place from 10 to 11:30 a.m. It will be held in the Andover City Council Chambers. I encourage you to mark this event on your calendars and attend!

Also my 2009 Legislative Survey is available for you to take. I value your feedback on the important issues the Legislature will be facing this year. Please visit my website, www.house.mn/49A to take the survey.

2. Legislative Budget Hearing

On Thursday, February 26th at 7:00 p.m. Legislators from both sides of the aisle and from both chambers of the Legislature will be meeting at the Coon Rapids City Hall, located at 11155 Robinson Drive. The purpose of this meeting is to be a public budget hearing on the state budget. It's a chance for people like you to come and let Legislative Leaders know where you stand on the issue and your thoughts on what should be done.

I will be attending this meeting, along with other elected officials from our area. I would encourage you to mark this on your calendar and try to attend. In preparation for the anticipated crowds there has been a website set up where interested people can sign up to speak at these meetings. I would encourage you to sign up if you would like to share your ideas by visiting <http://www.house.mn/budgetsignup.asp?loc=CoonRapids>.

3. Statewide Fraud Prevention Program

State investigators would assume full responsibility for fraud prevention among public assistance recipients according to Gov. Tim Pawlenty's budget recommendations, presented to the House Housing Finance and Policy and Public Health Finance Division.

Under the current system, 31 local investigators work in 55 counties using state grant allocations. If the state performs the prevention work, all 87 counties would be

monitored for fraud claims. County prevention grants would be phased out by November 2009.

Chuck Johnson, assistant commissioner for the Department of Human Services, said the plan estimates that state investigators could provide more investigations per month for the same costs as local government. The savings occur in the administration of the program, he said.

4. Voter ID Bill Voted Down

A bill that would require Minnesota voters to present a valid photo ID at their polling place on Election Day was defeated by members of a House committee.

HF57, sponsored by Rep. Tom Emmer (R-Delano), would also let voters who do not possess a driver's license or other valid form of photo ID to obtain a special voter ID card free of charge from their county election officials. Additionally, the bill would provide for provisional ballots for voters who fail to present their ID on Election Day.

Members of the House State and Local Government Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee voted 11-8 not to approve the bill. Members voted according to party lines, except for Rep. Phil Sterner (DFL-Rosemount).

I agree with Emmer and other supporters that this bill is necessary to ensure integrity in the state's elections and bolster public confidence in the voting process. Recent surveys on this issue show that over 70% of Minnesotans favor showing an ID to vote.

While the House voted this bill down, it is not completely dead. A companion bill in the Senate awaits action by the Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee.

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