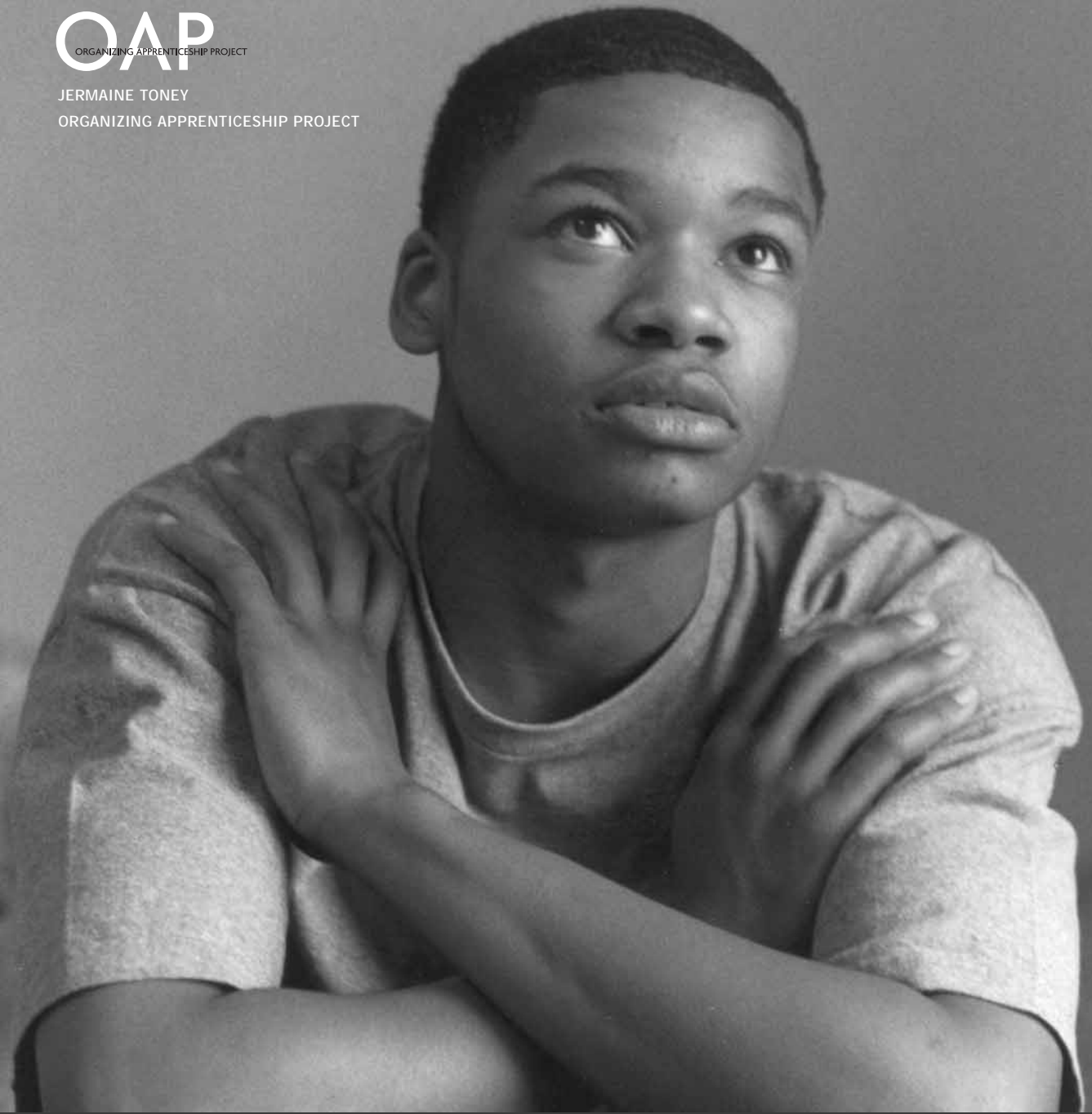




JERMAINE TONEY
ORGANIZING APPRENTICESHIP PROJECT



MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE REPORT CARD ON RACIAL EQUITY

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ORGANIZING APPRENTICESHIP PROJECT

The Organizing Apprenticeship Project works to advance racial, cultural, social and economic justice in Minnesota through organizer and leadership training, policy research and strategic convening work.

Crumbling color lines in Minnesota

Since 2006, the Organizing Apprenticeship Project has released two *Legislative Report Cards on Racial Equity*. We have assessed the governor's and state legislature's commitment to policies that strengthen opportunity, racial equity and American Indian tribal sovereignty. This report marks the third such assessment, documenting the progress made during the 2008 legislative session.

In the United States, we have made some progress on racial justice. Racial discrimination has been outlawed since the civil rights laws of 1960s. Recently, the U.S. elected its first person of color to the highest office in the land. Americans brought down a significant, historic and deeply symbolic barrier. Does this mean that all color lines in access, opportunities and outcomes have crumbled?¹ Or, that racism has died?² The answer is no, contrary to what most of us would like to believe.

Minnesota's racial disparities were here even before the election of a Black president. In fact, they are among the worst in the nation—undermining our state's prosperity and competitive advantage.³ And despite our state's reputation as a leader on key quality-of-life measures such as wealth, health and educational achievement, Minnesota's disparities have been growing. There is much to be done and now is the time to take action.

Since early 2008, we have been engaged in a wide-ranging opportunity analysis as it relates to Minnesota. Our analysis centered on one simple question: What are Minnesota's opportunities that could shape our current strategy and collective action to eliminate disparities and bring about racial and cultural equity?⁴

MINNESOTA'S OPPORTUNITY TO CRUMBLE COLOR LINES

Communities of Color Are Changing the Face of Minnesota

- As Minnesota ages, there is significant potential demographic power in communities of color. By 2035, two in 10 Minnesotans will be over the age of 65; that's an increase from 12 percent in 2005, with this growth occurring primarily among whites.⁵
- Meanwhile, one in four Minnesotans will be a person of color or American Indian person. Our communities of color will grow but also will be disproportionately young, compared to whites.⁶
- Communities of color will broaden their geographic reach. Currently, outside of the Twin Cities, communities are generally clustered in key areas of the state. In the north–American Indian tribes. South and west–growing immigrant communities. Largely centered in the broader metropolitan area are Blacks and Asian-Pacific Islanders. When we add up all of that geographic reach—which covers over three-quarters (77 percent) of legislative districts—we see that communities of color have a greater deal of power together than they would have alone.⁷ This reach will continue into the future.⁸

Minnesotans Benefit from Contributions of Communities of Color

- Communities of color and American Indian tribes are making economic contributions to our state. In 2005 alone, the buying power of people of color and American Indian people was estimated at \$175 billion, stronger than the gross domestic product for nearly 90 countries. By 2011, it is estimated to top \$228 billion.⁹
- Between 1990 and 2006, among states ranked by growth, the growth of Minnesota's Black buying power ranked 5th; Asian-Pacific Islanders ranked 5th; Latinos ranked 8th;¹⁰ Particularly noteworthy has been Minnesota's Latino businesses growing from only 1,163 in 1997 to 1,900 in 2002; and from employing just 115 people to roughly 500.¹¹

- Lastly, the state’s largest financial contribution through gambling comes from American Indian-run casinos. House Research has forecast that Indian gaming generates a staggering \$4 billion to \$6 billion in revenue every year through 18 casinos.¹² Together, those casinos are the state’s 12th largest employer and a lifeline for rural communities.¹³

Future Contributions of Minnesotans Are Undermined by Racial Disparities

- While 94 of white high school students graduate, only 89 percent of Asian-Pacific Islanders, 73 percent of Blacks and 70 percent of American Indians and Latinos graduate.¹⁴
- Nearly 7 percent of white Minnesotans are facing poverty. However, 20 percent of Latinos; 17 percent of Asian-Pacific Islanders; 30 percent of American Indians; and one-third (33 percent) of Blacks are facing poverty.¹⁵
- Although the unemployment rate among whites is 4.3 percent, Blacks have an unemployment rate that is three times higher (12.9 percent), Latinos have an unemployment rate of 6.4 percent and the rate among Asian-Pacific Islanders is 5 percent.¹⁶
- Due to barriers to reentry, thousands of formerly incarcerated Minnesotans are limited in their means to financially improve their communities. Recent statewide community listening sessions revealed that for Minnesotans with a criminal record, it is next to impossible to find a job or rent an apartment. As a result, barriers disproportionately force people of color into unemployment and poverty.¹⁷

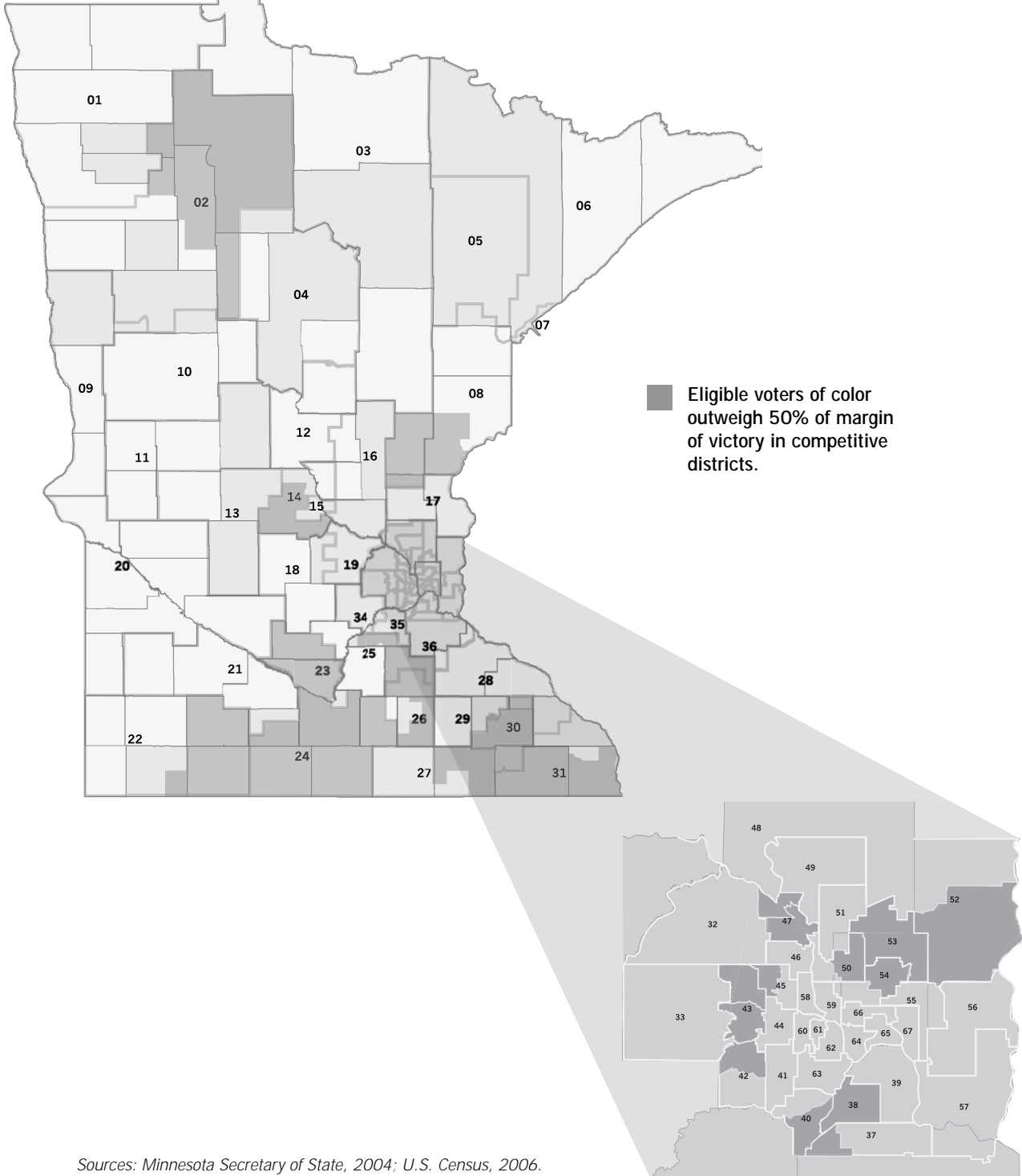
Business leaders, researchers, educators, social service providers, philanthropists, community organizers and legislative leaders are paying attention to these racial disparities. In particular, communities of color and American Indian communities are closely watching and will be core to challenging our legislative leaders to end disparities in our state.

Minnesotans of Color Have Power to Decide Elections

- There is significant potential electoral power in Minnesota’s communities of color. By 2020, our electorate will become more racially and ethnically diverse; eligible voters of color are estimated to make up 20 percent of the electorate.¹⁸ At the moment, voters of color account for 10 percent of the electorate.¹⁹
- That electorate and potential power could increase by tens of thousands when practical barriers to voting are eliminated for the formerly incarcerated, persons on probation or parole, and when the path to citizenship is affirmed for all new Minnesotans.²⁰
- As the electorate becomes potentially larger and more diverse, there will be an upswing in the number of very competitive election races. In fact, Minnesota has the most competitive state legislative races of any state in the Upper Midwest.²¹

“We have the opportunity to crumble color lines, one of the greatest leadership imperatives of our time as we age and become more diverse. Failure to look at the impact of state policies on communities of color will have long-term economic and political consequences.”

MINNESOTA'S VOTERS OF COLOR HAVE POWER TO DECIDE ELECTIONS
IN A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT



Sources: Minnesota Secretary of State, 2004; U.S. Census, 2006.

- In these competitive districts, there are tight margins of victory and high potential for party turnover. In addition, communities of color are growing rapidly. Our analysis revealed that in 80 percent of the 34 closely watched competitive districts voters of color outweigh 50 percent of the margin of victory.²² Simply put, voters of color have a great deal of potential political power, particularly in this competitive environment. Throughout the future, communities of color will be critical to deciding elections within the state legislature, but also the governor's seat as well as national offices.

Lawmakers searching for the support of voters of color and racial justice allies will have to commit to paying attention to impacts of policies on racial and cultural communities. We have to get it right. Clearly, our lawmakers have the opportunity to crumble color lines, one of the greatest opportunities of our time as we age and become more diverse. Failure to do so will have long-term social, economic and political consequences.

KEY FINDINGS OF REPORT

The state legislature and governor earned an “F” for 47 percent support for racial equity bills. The body as a whole has stagnated on progress. Only seven of the 15 bills that we studied made it into law, translating into an “F,” down from a “D” a year ago. This year's overall grade would have been better had both worked together—if the legislature passed two bills out of committees and the governor signed the six bills that died on his desk. Or, had the legislature over rode those six bills that were vetoed by the governor.

The legislature and governor showed improvement in some issue areas from last year's report. Health equity bills pass rate rose from 67 percent (2/3) a year ago to 100 percent (3/3). Criminal justice bills pass rates rose from 33 percent last year to 67 percent (2/3), compared to zero percent in 2005-06.

More individual legislators lead and supported racial equity legislation. There was growth in the number of champions for racial equity. Last year there were only eight champions, this year there were 17 lawmakers with an “A”. There was also growth in the number of lawmakers earning “Bs”. Although last year there were 15 legislators with “Bs”, this year there were 84 legislators.

More individual legislators are making the grade where constituents of color make up the majority. There are nine districts where constituents of color make up the majority of the district's population. Last year, only three legislators received an “A,” and only three legislators earned a “B”. This year four legislators earned an “A,” and five legislators earned a “B”.

Legislators in districts where constituents of color match or are less than the state's percentage of people of color showed strong support for racial equity bills. Over one-third (41 percent) of the districts with less than the state's percentage of people of color, earned an “A” or “B”. Senator Dennis Frederickson (R-New Ulm), Representatives Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) and Dean Urdahl (R-Grove City) who earned a “C” and Larry Howes (R-Walker) who earned a “B” all deserve honorable mention as leaders of the Republicans for their support of racial equity legislation.

Legislators in counties with rapid growth in communities of color showed limited support for racial equity bills. Nearly 60 percent of the legislators in counties facing the state's highest percentage of growth in communities of color earned a "D" or "F". Here is the breakdown: Wright County (138 percent)—Tom Emmer (R-Delano) earned an "F"; Scott (130 percent)—Michael Beard (R-Shakopee) an "F"; Sherburne (95 percent)—Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) a "D"; Anoka (85 percent)—Chris DeLaForest (R-Andover) an "F"; Carver (74 percent)—Paul Kohls (R-Victoria) an "F"; Isanti (71 percent)—Rob Eastlund (R-Isanti) a "D".

HONOR ROLL—LEGISLATORS WITH A'S: House Representatives David Bly (D-Northfield), Karen Clark (D-Minneapolis), Jim Davnie (D-Minneapolis), Mindy Greiling (D-Roseville), Phyllis Kahn (D-Minneapolis), Diane Loeffler (D-Minneapolis), Carlos Mariani (D-St. Paul), Linda Slocum (D-Richfield). **SENATORS:** Linda Berglin (D-Minneapolis), Tarryl Clark (D-St. Cloud), Linda Higgins (D-Minneapolis), Ann Lynch (D-Rochester), Mee Moua (D-St. Paul), Mary Olson (D-Beltrami County), Sandra Pappas (D-St. Paul), Patricia Torres-Ray (D-Minneapolis) and Charles Wiger (D-North St. Paul). Legislators that govern rural, suburban and urban communities are represented.

LAWMAKERS WITH B'S: House Representatives Tom Anzelc (D-Balsam Township), Joe Atkins (D-Inver Grove Heights), John Benson (D-Minnetonka), Karla Bigham (D-Cottage Grove), Robin Brown (D-Albert Lea), Kathy Brynaert (D-Mankato), Julie Bunn (D-Lake Elmo), Lyndon Carlson (D-Crystal), Denise Dittrich (D-Champlin), Augustine Dominguez (D-Minneapolis), Patti Fritz (D-Faribault), Paul Gardner (D-Shoreview), Rick Hansen (D-South St. Paul), Alice Hausman (D-St. Paul), Larry Haws (D-St. Cloud), Debra Hilstrom (D-Brooklyn Center), Bill Hilty (D-Finlayson), Frank Hornstein (D-Minneapolis), Melissa Hortman (D-Brooklyn Park), Larry Hosch (D-St. Joseph), Larry Howes (R-Walker), Thomas Huntley (D-Duluth), Mike Jaros (D-Duluth), Sheldon Johnson (D-St. Paul), Jeremy Kalin (D-Lindstrom), Margaret Anderson Kelliher (D-Minneapolis), Kate Knuth (D-New Brighton), Carolyn Laine (D-Columbia Heights), Ann Lenczewski (D-Bloomington), John Lesch (D-St. Paul), Bernard Lieder (D-Crookston), Leon Lillie (D-North St. Paul), Shelley Madore (D-Apple Valley), Tim Mahoney (D-St. Paul), Sandra Masin (D-Eagan), Frank Moe (D-Bemidji), Will Morgan (D-Burnsville), Terry Morrow (D-St. Peter), Joe Mullery (D-Minneapolis), Mary Murphy (D-Hermantown), Erin Murphy (D-St. Paul), Michael Nelson (D-Brooklyn Park), Kim Norton (D-Rochester), Michael Paymar (D-St. Paul), Aaron Peterson (D-Appleton), Sandra Peterson (D-New Hope), Tom Rukavina (D-Virginia), Maria Ruud (D-Minnetonka), Brita Sailer (D-Park Rapids), Bev Scalze (D-Little Canada), Anthony Sertich (D-Chisholm), Steve Simon (D-St. Louis Park), Nora Slawik (D-Maplewood), Marsha Swails (D-Woodbury), Cy Thao (D-St. Paul), Paul Thissen (D-Minneapolis), Tom Tillbery (D-Fridley), Ken Tschumper (D-La Crescent), Jean Wagenius (D-Minneapolis), Neva Walker (D-Minneapolis), Ryan Winkler (D-Golden Valley) and Sandy Wollschlager (D-Canon Falls). **SENATORS:** Ellen Anderson (D-St. Paul), Don Betzold (D-Fridley), Terri Bonoff (D-Minnetonka), Kevin Dahle (D-Northfield), Scott Dibble (D-Minneapolis), John Doll (D-Burnsville), Sharon Erickson-Ropes (D-Winona), Keith Langseth (D-Glyndon), Dan Larson (D-Bloomington), Ron Latz (D-St. Louis Park), Tony Lourey (D-Kerrick), Rick Olseen (D-Harris), Lawrence Pogemiller (D-Minneapolis), Yvonne Prettner-Solon (D-Duluth), Ann Rest (D-New Hope), Sandy Rummel (D-White Bear Lake), Tom Saxhaug (D-Grand Rapids), Linda Scheid (D-Brooklyn Park), Kathy Sheran (D-Mankato), Katie Sieben (D-Newport), Rod Skoe (D-Clearbrook) and Jim Vickerman (D-Tracy).

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