

State Senator Julianne Ortman Capitol Report



120 State Capitol Bldg. Email: sen.julianne.ortman@senate.mn Capitol Phone: 651-296-4837

**"I wish we could put up some of the Christmas spirit in jars and open a jar of it every month."
- Harlan Miller**

Dear Friends,

As happens every year, with the holiday season quickly approaching, calendars quickly fill with events and meetings. It has been no different here at the Capitol where questions about daycare unionization, Vikings Stadium proposals, and upcoming legislation continue to be discussed.

We just received the updated economic forecast for the state. While some refer to a "surplus" for the state, over half of the increased revenue in the state is due to 2010 tax liabilities – which were unusually high due to Congress' delay in acting to extend the Bush tax cuts. This is not likely to be a trend, but more likely one-time revenue. The entire \$876 million surplus is already dedicated, (like automatic payments coming out of your bank account) so there is no extra money at the state level.

When we balanced the 2012-1013 budget, we made commitments for any excess revenues or savings to be set aside for a cash flow account, and a state reserve account. For my part, I will resist any efforts on the part of the legislature or the Governor to spend this money because it will improve Minnesota's long-term economic health. Maintaining a healthy reserve account will likely lead credit ratings agencies to improve Minnesota's credit rating.

You will find the most updated information on these topics in this newsletter. I encourage you to take some time during your busy schedule to catch up on the many activities that have been happening here in St. Paul and around our district.

My very warmest wishes to you and your family during this Christmas season,

Julianne



Hearing all Proposals...

On November 29th and December 6th, the Senate conducted joint hearings of the MN Senate Tax and Local Government committees and the Senate Tax and State Government committees to check in on the many proposals about a potential stadium bill. The Vikings, the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission, and members of the general public were invited to share their views regarding site selection and funding for a Vikings Stadium. Senator Ortman chaired both hearings and received praise from the media, testifiers, and those submitting written testimony for her fair yet firm chairing of these hearings which included over 10 hours of testimony.

There were no votes taken, as these hearings were informational in purpose, to allow the public and legislators the opportunity to hear all options being discussed to finance and build the stadium. Legislators may introduce bills this session, which will be scheduled to be heard in committees following the regular Senate Rules for process. As proposals arrive at the legislature, our committees will meet to hear testimony and vote. To watch video of the two committee hearings, please check out the link below and click on the day you wish to view:

http://www.senate.mn/schedule/schedule_list.php?cmte_id=1019&ls=

Senator Ortman Received Landmark Tekne Award for Public Service

At the recent 2011 Minnesota Tekne Awards banquet, Senator Ortman received the Public Service Award for her role in improving Minnesota's prosperity through technology and innovation, and for including critical grant funding in the 2011

Senate Tax bill, authorizing funds for research and innovation at academic institutions and businesses

across the state. The Tekne Awards are awarded by the a Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA), which works with individuals, non-profits, and businesses with a goal of making

Minnesota one of the "top five states in technology by 2020." The Awards highlight exceptional achievements in a number of areas, from non-profit organizations to software development. The Public Service category was created this year to honor those individuals in the public sector that provide outstanding service in support of Minnesota's growing technology economy.



Senator Ortman speaks on the topic of Judicial Elections

On December 9, Senator Julianne Ortman participated in a panel discussion at the Twin West Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast, with Rep. Mike Beard. The panel focused on the pros and cons of the proposal by the Coalition for Impartial Justice to change the manner of judicial selection, retention, and evaluation in Minnesota through a constitutional amendment.

In February 2008, Senator Ortman was published in Law & Politics Magazine regarding her position on this issue. See link to the article above!

Find out what Senator Ortman thinks about this topic. Check out her article on Minnesotans' Constitutional Right to Elect Judges here!

<http://www.senate.mn/senators/34Ort>

Just In! Union Daycare Update

On December 5, Ramsey County Judge Dale Lindman ordered a temporary restraining order on the mailing of the ballots, ruling that Governor Mark Dayton had overstepped his authority by issuing an executive order for a ballot of daycares whether to unionize, rather than sending it to the state legislature. As a result, the ballots that were to be sent out on December 6th will not be sent out. The ruling buys time for the many daycare centers that oppose such unionization. You can find the ruling and further information here at <http://www.childcarefreedom.com/>.

STAY INFORMED

November 2011 Economic Forecast: <http://www.mmb.state.mn.us/fu-current-fore-nov>

Vikings Proposals: http://www.senate.mn/schedule/schedule_list.php?cmte_id=1019&ls=

Property Tax: Truth in Taxation - <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hrd/issinfo/csim12A1.pdf>

Impact of Homestead Market Value Exclusion - http://www.senate.mn/members/member_bio_personal.php?mem_id=1044&ls=87

Recent Television Programs featuring Senator Ortman

Almanac (Dec 2, 2011): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2-kxso2ucA&feature=related>

Capitol Report (Oct 20, 2011): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNvDqskUOM&list=UUWzzi_90dqxz5pBFJVSpIg&feature=plc

Please join me on December 20th at the American Legion in Chanhassen at 7:30am for a Legislative Breakfast with the Carver County Board!