

DFL State Legislative Priorities 2007 - 2008

Agriculture

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF RURAL COMMUNITIES AND FAMILY FARMS: Support the economic well-being of rural communities through the preservation of small business and family farms and fair prices for agricultural products.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT: Support educational research and development programs, including sustainable agriculture.

WILD RICE: Impose a moratorium on the introduction of genetically engineered wild rice in Minnesota to protect natural lake and river strains.

Business and Community Development

WORKFORCE HOUSING: Provide affordable housing for all Minnesotans, including assistance to local governments that promote mixed-income housing opportunities.

Civil and Human Rights

DISCRIMINATION: Oppose discrimination against any person on the basis of race, creed, religion, sex, sexual or affectional orientation, HIV status, marital or homemaker status, disability or age.

RIGHTS: Oppose any constitutional amendment that prohibits or limits marriage, civil unions, and/or legal protections for same sex couples

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS: Oppose any legislative or constitutional restriction on a women's right to reproductive freedom. Fully fund family planning without restrictions on services, counseling, or advocacy.

Consumer Issues

FOOD AND LABELING STANDARDS: Support food quality and labeling standards that protect the public from unsafe food products and deceptive labeling.

Education

FUNDING: Fully fund our public educational systems including but not limited to K-12, buildings and maintenance costs, and adequate pay for teachers

HIGHER EDUCATION: Adequately fund the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) by requiring the state to meet its legally stipulated 67% share of college instructional costs.

FINANCIAL AID: Support state and federal financial aid grants, loans, and tax credits to make higher education affordable to all citizens.

Energy

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND CONSERVATION: Aggressively develop renewable, clean energy sources including wind, solar, hydroelectric, and biomass together with conservation to reduce our reliance on fossil and nuclear fuels.

Government Accountability to the Public

NATIVE AMERICAN RIGHTS: Support Native American tribes' rights to self-government and the generation of revenue to serve their people.

Health and Human Services

SMALL BUSINESS AND MINNESOTA CARE: Allow small business owner, farmers, and their employees to enroll in Minnesota Care, prorated according to income and ability to pay.

STEM CELL RESEARCH: Support state and federally funded genetic and stem cell research.

FILLING PRESCRIPTIONS: Require every pharmacist to properly fill all lawful pharmaceutical prescriptions.

PATIENTS RIGHTS: Support the rights of patients and their families, guardians, and physicians to honor a decision not to extend life by artificial means.

Labor and Employment

UNION RIGHTS: Support the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively.

Natural Resources and the Environment

STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS: Support environmental programs with provisions for sustainable, long term use of natural resources, enforcement and a strong role for government in environmental protection.

HAZARD RESPONSIBILITY: Support the legal responsibility of individuals, businesses and government to notify others of possible environmental hazards, to clean up those they have created, and compensate others for any resulting damages.

Public Safety and Crime Prevention

VICTIM AID PROGRAMS: Restore funding for programs and services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and appropriate funds to underserved rural counties and regions.

CRIME VICTIM PROTECTION: Protection of victims of crime through the mandatory arrest of domestic abusers and mandatory sentences for convicted rapists, as well as government-funded programs to house, treat, counsel and educate victims of abuse, rape or other violence.

Tax and Budget Policy

REPEAL FISCALLY UNSOUND TAX CUTS: Repeal fiscally unsound tax cuts that benefit the top 1% of taxpayers.

AGRICULTURAL LAND: Tax agricultural lands on the basis of production value rather than market value.

Transportation

COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Minnesota's transportation systems should be coordinated, well designed and maintained and support the efficient use of resources. Increase investment in Minnesota's transportation system and infrastructure statewide, including well maintained roads and bridges, public transportation, mass transit, commuter rail corridors, light rail, buses, bicycle lanes and pedestrian ways.