



Graphic courtesy of the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee

## Our Primary Election votes are important!

DFL-endorsed candidates do have opponents in this election. Four other people have filed in the DFL primary for the position held by DFL-endorsed U.S. Sen. Tina Smith, and another four are running against DFL-endorsed U.S. Rep, District 4, Betty McCollum.

Vote at the polls on primary day, Tuesday, August 11, or earlier by absentee ballot.

Voting by mail is a great way to protect yourself, other voters, and election officials from COVID-19. To request your absentee ballot and get more information, go to: <http://mnvotebymail.org/register/> Due to COVID-19, there is no witness requirement for registered voters for the August 11 State Primary.

Also let your friends and family know how easy it is to vote by mail in the Primary Election and General Election this year.

## In this issue

- Our Primary Election votes are important! 1
- Real policing reform in the wake of George Floyd's murder 2
- Willing to volunteer for Marty? 3
- Minnesotans must come together to persevere over monumental struggles 4
- Minnesota's crises and divided legislature 5
- Struggles and resilience 6
- Being the change we want to see 7
- Politics and the environment 8
- SD66 DFL leadership report 10

## Upcoming events

**Monday, August 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Budget Subcommittee Meeting

**Tuesday, August 4, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, August 11, 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.**  
Primary Election

**Tuesday, August 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

**Saturday, August 29**  
State Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, September 1, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Monday, September 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, September 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

**Monday, October 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, October 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, October 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

See page 11 for full calendar.

## Real policing reform in the wake of George Floyd's murder

by Sen. John Marty



There is great urgency in adopting bold reform in our policing system. Although many people weren't aware of it, this has long been an urgent need, at least for black men and other people of color.

Now, with nationwide outrage over the situation, we are at a tipping point where there is an opportunity for change.

To illustrate how far we are from *equal justice under law*, imagine if you, or I, or anyone else, killed a man by slowly crushing his neck on a city street. We would not have had the privilege of going home that night. We would have been arrested immediately. We would be promptly charged for the heinous crime. We would have our day in court, but we would have been arrested immediately.

However, in this case, the officers were able to go home. When they were fired (the next day) news reports commented on what a dramatic change that was from previous practice. When former officer Chauvin was arrested several days later, that too was much faster than normal.

If you don't see racism in the George Floyd murder, ask yourself how many white parents need to have the "talk" that every black parent has with their kids about how to act when they are confronted by police. For that matter, ask how many white teenagers have their car pulled over by police, 10, 12, or 15 times per year?

Less than three weeks after George Floyd was killed, the Minnesota Legislature met in special session. Legislators in the People of Color and Indigenous (POCI) Caucus offered a long list of reforms to change the way policing is done. Unfortunately, they met resistance from the Senate Republican majority, who responded with a package of milquetoast proposals for policing reform, and attempted to pass them over the objections of DFL senators, including every member of the POCI Caucus. The Republican proposals could be described as tinkering in a time of crisis and seem tone-deaf to the times. They adjourned a few days later, without considering the POCI Caucus reforms.

The Senate POCI Caucus members all spoke powerfully about the racism they experience, and the understandable fear that people of color face every day.

Among the many thoughtful proposals the POCI Caucus members offered, Sen. Fong Hawj's amendment to ban police "warrior" training is one I want to highlight. This type of training promotes the idea that officers should view all encounters as a threat. Police frequently face dangerous situations so they should be cautious. But there is a balance here—most situations should not have police approaching with a sense of paranoia and their guns drawn.

A Florida State University study of policing found that the warrior mentality "often leads to more use of force, making it more likely that the officer or the citizen gets injured." In the study, police who scored higher on the "warrior" measure had "more favorable attitudes toward *excessive* use of force."

It's not just researchers who find problems with "warrior training" for police. A police training expert—the executive director of the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training—said these trainings "made police officers very paranoid."

Training police to be paranoid is a deadly problem. The officer who shot and killed Philando Castile in 2016 had participated in a "Bulletproof Warrior" training. He panicked after stopping Castile's car for a broken taillight, firing multiple times, killing him.

While the Senate Republicans rejected Senator Hawj's amendment to ban this training during the June special session, the public continued speaking out, creating strong political pressure for change. As a result, during the July special session Senate Republicans agreed to compromise legislation making some significant steps forward on a number of the issues.

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For the warrior training, the legislation prohibits cities to pay for such training. However, in Minneapolis, the Police Federation has been paying for such training, and there is nothing to stop them from continuing to do so.

Because this training is creating more dangerous police officers, it is not enough to stop paying for it; we need to provide **retraining** to undo the harm caused by it. We cannot accept officers with a “shoot first and ask questions later” mentality.

As a white man, I do not live with the daily fear that the police will shoot me if I have a broken tail light; I don't have the fear that if I inadvertently pass a counterfeit \$20 bill, I will be tortured and killed by a police officer's knee. I cannot fully understand the reality that all black men face. I need to continually listen and try to understand, and then need to act accordingly.

George Floyd's murder brought worldwide attention to Minnesota's policing problems. The nation is watching to see how we respond. The new legislation passed in July inches Minnesota forward on some needed changes, but it won't fundamentally fix the system. It is time to listen to the experience, the stories, and the ideas of POCI Senators and other people of color. It is time to address the inherent racism in our policing.

## Willing to volunteer for Marty?

If you are willing to take a lawn sign or to volunteer, please contact the Marty campaign at [info@johnmarty.org](mailto:info@johnmarty.org) or leave a message at (651) 633-8934. Be sure to leave your name, address, email, and/or phone.

We need volunteers to:

- Distribute and install lawn signs
- Post on social media
- Apply tech skills

Progressive change cannot move forward with a Republican Senate Majority. We need to **#FlipMNSenate**. If you are willing to join me in helping other Minnesota Senate campaigns, please let us know.

Thanks,  
John Marty

# Minnesotans must come together to persevere over monumental struggles

by Rep. John Lesch

This year, the State of Minnesota is facing a difficult, unprecedented set of challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally forced all of us to make a variety of adaptations in our lives, including those related to the workplace, school, and child care. There's also an undoubtedly tragic public-health impact our state will continue to grapple with. To be sure, Minnesota—due to our strong public health surveillance system and innovative research institutions such as the Minnesota Department of Health, Mayo Clinic, and the University of Minnesota—has experienced better results than most states. Gov. Tim Walz has also taken a responsible, measured approach to this pandemic from both an economic and a health perspective, protecting the health and safety of Minnesotans while delivering resources so they can weather the economic storm.



Still, over 1,500 Minnesotans have lost their lives due to the virus, and to their families, outperforming other states is of little solace. My DFL colleagues in the Minnesota Legislature and I will continue to collaborate with Gov. Walz to ensure Minnesotans will be able to rebound from this crisis.

Lawmakers also have the urgent responsibility to address criminal justice and police accountability reforms in a meaningful way. George Floyd should still be alive. That Minneapolis police officers killed him in the fashion they did—on videotape for the entire world to witness—is the result of a complete lack of humanity on their part, but is also symptomatic of a system that for too long has lacked accountability and has failed to make adequate progress in delivering racial justice.

Right away, attention from around the world shined on our state. As Minnesotans from all walks of life made their voices heard to demand change, DFL lawmakers—led by the People of Color and Indigenous (POCI) Caucus—went to work right away. The POCI Caucus developed the Minnesota Police Accountability Act of 2020, a series of reforms to strengthen accountability, reclaim community oversight, and reimagine public safety.

Unfortunately, despite the eyes of the whole world on our state, the Senate Republican Majority wouldn't meet us in this critical moment to deliver change. The GOP refused to go further than their half-hearted package of policy changes. While their proposals had some new training requirements and suggestions for new procedures, it lacked the real accountability Minnesotans—especially those from communities of color—deserve at this pivotal time.

It's important to note that many of the proposals put forth by the POCI Caucus aren't new, but have just received a renewed focus in the wake of George Floyd's killing. Nothing short of meaningful, transformative changes like those passed by the House DFL are acceptable.

While the work on these issues is ongoing, this legislative session we were able to reach common ground on a pair of measures to help Minnesotans access the prescription medication they need. One such measure is the Alec Smith Insulin Affordability Act, landmark legislation to help ensure people with diabetes can access the insulin they need in an emergency situation, and create a long-term path to access affordable insulin. The bill is named after Alec Smith, a 26-year-old from Richfield who tragically died when he was forced to ration his insulin because he couldn't afford to refill his prescription.

Unconscionably, on the eve of this legislation becoming law, Big Pharma filed a lawsuit to stop it from going on the books. It shouldn't be surprising, but despite massive industry consolidation and skyrocketing profits, these companies will stop at nothing to protect their bottom line, even if it means people go without the medications they need to live. Even Republican legislators—who aren't exactly quick to stand in opposition to drug makers' goals—were taken aback by this move.

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Another law we passed aimed at reducing drug prices is the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act. It requires pharmaceutical companies to report the reasons for price increases and provide other detailed information about the cost of manufacturing, marketing, and distributing drugs. This is only one step aimed at reducing the price of prescription drugs, and I will keep pushing for bolder initiatives, like my legislation to ban prescription drug price gouging outright so everyone can access the medication they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

By working together, we can forge a pathway toward a Minnesota that works better for everyone, no matter what they look like or where they live. Everyone deserves to be safe, healthy, and experience economic security, no exceptions. I know exactly how important these values are to our community, and I'm committed to ensuring my work at the State Capitol is reflective of them.

## Minnesota's crises and divided legislature

by Rep. Alice Hausman



As I write this article, we have just begun special session number two. The special session is called by the governor to extend the emergency order. It does not mean we have reached an agreement on the bonding bill or any other outstanding issue.

We are the only divided legislature in the country. Nevertheless, Minnesotans expect us to get things done. They don't want excuses or blaming. I am extremely frustrated about how we are working together. Yes, we have managed some bipartisan work as a response to the pandemic but Minnesota deserves more.

By the time you read this, I hope we have passed a bonding bill, a police accountability and reform bill, and a small supplemental bill. To do less hurts the whole state.

One reason I desperately want a bonding bill to pass is because that is where housing gets a large part of its funding. There is general obligation bonding for public housing and 100 million dollars for housing infrastructure bonds. With that tool we partner with nonprofits who leverage three dollars of private money for every dollar of public money.

We have a crisis. People are living in encampments in our parks. Some people living in those encampments have jobs. They just don't make enough money to afford housing. Others are facing mental health or addiction issues that require a good health-care system. That is another negative outcome. If you have less money, you have worse health outcomes. So we have work to do—in our cities and counties and at the legislature. Giving up is not an option.

Town hall link—Sen. Marty and I recently held a town hall meeting to discuss some of this work. If you missed it and are interested, this is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/senjohnmarty/videos/219788239122497>



## Struggles and resilience

by Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo



The last few weeks for me have been a reminder of both the many struggles we face together—systemic racism, a raging pandemic, deep fiscal disparities—and our collective resilience.

Like many of you I was horrified to read of the racist practices at the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office that led to correctional officers of color at the Adult Detention Center being forced to segregate away from former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin. We at Ramsey County are committed to getting to the bottom of what happened and ensuring that no Ramsey County employee need fear race-based discrimination in the workplace. This may lead us into uncomfortable places in the months ahead, but I strongly believe that it is necessary to give the support our officers and staff deserve.

This week, my colleagues and I on the Board of Commissioners declared July 6 and 7 in honor of Philando Castile, who was murdered four years ago this week on Larpenteur Avenue. This anniversary is a reminder that the problems exposed in the George Floyd murder are not unique to that officer or city, but can happen everywhere and at any time. Our response and our strategies to prevent future tragedies need to recognize this and confront it clearheadedly.

In the coming months, officials at all levels of government will face hard choices about reopening schools and businesses, taking care of people experiencing homelessness, maintaining food access, and so many other areas. I am proud that Ramsey County is taking the lead in these conversations locally and regionally, and I am so proud of our hardworking staff and families. Local government is not a glamorous job, but moments like these reveal just how important it is to have institutions that function well and have the support they need. I will continue to fight on the Board of Commissioners to ensure that our staff know we have their back.

With all of these tragedies mounting upon us, I know many in our community may feel overwhelmed. If you feel in crisis, I urge you to call Ramsey County's mental health hotline at (651) 266-7900. You are loved. You matter. Please seek help if you need it.

# Being the change we want to see

by Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire



We have experienced a lot across our communities in the first half of 2020; I have been encouraged by the number of residents that have been standing up against racial injustices and police brutality, and also those who have stepped up to help our neighbors deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope that in the second half of 2020, we continue to see the resilience and strength of our community show through.

Undoing centuries of racial injustice will not happen overnight, and I'm proud to be a part of a county which is working to make our community one where all are valued and thrive. This work is not business as usual. Transforming how our county works is critical to achieving our goals of well-being, opportunity, and pursuit of prosperity for all.

As a member of the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, I reaffirm to you our commitment to our guiding vision and goals. Deliberate strategies of community engagement and partnership for racial and health equity now expand across all of

Ramsey County's program and investment areas. It is how we hold ourselves accountable to our community for being the change we want to see.

At a recent board meeting, we took another step forward on our Transforming Systems Together work when we appointed nine community members and alternates to join Ramsey County department leaders to study county policies, programs, and budgets, and to make decisions on how to redesign services to be more responsive to community needs.

I look forward to working with these leaders as we continue to make Ramsey County a place where we all live, work, and play safely together. To learn more about our TST work, please visit <https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/projects-initiatives/transforming-systems-together>.

I also want to encourage everyone to make sure they are registered to vote by mail for both the August 11 Primary and November 3 General Election. As a reminder, I would like to ask those of you who live in Roseville and Lauderdale for your vote in the August 11 Primary. The race for county commissioner is nonpartisan on the ballot, so you will need to flip over your ballot and vote for me.

Please feel free to visit my campaign website at [mcguireforcountyboard.org](http://mcguireforcountyboard.org) to contribute, volunteer, or ask questions. I need and appreciate your support! Thank you very much!

## Politics and the environment

by Gwen Willems



Warning: this article might be harmful to your optimism.

### The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

In an attempt to get Gov. Walz and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to delay stricter clean car standards, Republicans in the Minnesota Senate continue to stall the release of \$61.4 million from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as was passed by the Minnesota House in the regular session. This is the first time the release of Environmental Trust Funds has been blocked since voters created the fund in 1988 with tax dollars collected from the state lottery. “It looks like nothing more will happen on the environmental front until next year,” said Rep. Peter Fischer, DFL-43A, [Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division Committee](#).

These funds are critical to about 250 jobs and 80 projects that protect and enhance Minnesota’s environment and natural resources. The projects control the spread of aquatic invasive species, preserve pollinator populations, improve parks and trails across the state, help cities replace trees lost to emerald ash borer, implement set-asides of conservation and hunting lands, and do much more.

### Numerous other environmental problems in Minnesota

Let’s examine a few. For example, on large-scale livestock farms in Minnesota the use of commercial fertilizer and nutrient-rich manure on row crops is producing dangerous overloads of nitrogen and phosphorous, writes the Environmental Working Group (EWG). The problem is exacerbated by regulations split among three state agencies and too few staff members to check application rates and safeguards. “There’s just too much manure and the landscape can’t handle it,” according to Sarah Porter, co-author of [EWG’s report](#) (May 28, 2020).

In late June, the Trump administration said it will begin to review plans for Twin Metals’ toxic copper-sulfide mine, with storage of tailings underground near Ely and Birch Lake, within the Rainy River Watershed and Superior National Forest and five miles from the Boundary Waters. “This is another slap in the face of all people who care about clean water and public lands,” said Chris Knopf, executive director of Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness (FBWW). In its unflagging enthusiasm for Antofagasta, the Chilean-owned mining company behind Twin Metals, the Trump administration has suppressed science, hid information, ignored pending litigation, and twisted the law to allow a foreign company to override the will of the American people, according to FBWW. They believe that the Department of the Interior will conduct the most superficial of reviews at breakneck speed and with arbitrary page limits.

“Minnesota’s natural resources, industries, agribusiness, recreation, stored products and structures, and human health are threatened or harmed by hundreds of invasive species,” according to the [Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council](#). Aquatic invasive species (AIS)—zebra mussels, Asian carp, curly leaf pondweed, Eurasian watermilfoil, starry stonewort, and others—continue to spread in Minnesota lakes, rivers, and other wetlands. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources just confirmed (July 13, 2020) that Eurasian watermilfoil is in another lake—Big Mantrap Lake in Hubbard County, a popular destination for anglers fishing for muskellunge, northern pike, largemouth bass, and panfish. For more information on AIS and scientific efforts to reduce the spread and appropriately manage AIS, visit the [Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center website](#).

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## What is happening on the national level

We all know that President Trump is no friend of the environment. He has worked ceaselessly to dismantle every conservation and climate-change advance made by the Obama Administration, withdrawn the United States from the Paris Agreement, rolled back regulations meant to keep water and air clean and safe, sold public lands for the benefit of large corporations doing mining and logging, opened Alaskan nature preserves to allow extremist hunters to kill sleeping bear cubs and wolf pups in their dens, and set back the national climate mitigation conversation by decades.



Trump uses the coronavirus as a cover for his anti-environmental policies. The Sierra Club recently sent me their nut-shell list of “10 ways the Trump administration used the COVID-10 crisis to make you less safe.” They are:

1. Letting polluters police themselves, rather than the EPA doing its job.
2. Allowing more carbon emissions from cars.
3. Weakening [Mercury and Air Toxic Standards \(MATS\)](#)
4. Giving away more to big oil.
5. Giving away even more to big oil.
6. Replacing Obama’s clean power plan.
7. [Gutting the Clean Water Act](#).
8. Striking down safeguards against coal ash.
9. Nixing the [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#).
10. Silencing scientists.

As someone raised to value education, facts, and rationality, I find #10 especially disheartening, that science is being ignored and even trashed. We know it is especially important when we’re so knowledgeable about climate change and environmental problems to address them now.

It’s time to vote, and to urge every progressive we know to vote!

*Gwen is co-chair of the Capitol Region Watershed District Citizen Advisory Committee.*

## SD66 DFL leadership report

by SD66 Chair Ryan Lee



It's hard to believe that it's already August. As a community, we are looking back on a summer that passed by without the usual traditions but was filled with new ones. There was no Rose Parade, no annual SD66 DFL picnic, no door knocking, and no in-person campaign rallies. Yet June saw the parks and streets of Minneapolis and St. Paul swell with people protesting policy brutality, remembering the life of George Floyd and countless other victims of police violence, and demanding that the country and its institutions finally recognize that Black Lives Matter. And just last month, we marked the fourth year since Philando Castile was taken from the community.

2020 calls us to action and activism in a way that no other year has. Some of you have answered that call by participating in those protests and donating to charitable organizations supporting the families and communities affected. Some of you stepped up to get involved in the senate district DFL party unit. And some of you have stayed home to keep others safe. We still have a long way to go to giving members of underrepresented communities a voice in our politics and fostering a society and culture that values diversity, inclusion, and equity, but we are taking our first steps.

I wanted to take a moment to thank the executive committee members from the 2018-2020 term who invested a great deal of time and effort in the district, but who are no longer serving in that capacity, including Jessica Ebb, Charissa Jones, Glenora Southern, Heather Von St. James, Elizabeth Wendland, Linda Zelig, and Cody Zwiefelhofer. We especially appreciate the hard work of Morgan Carr-Markel, our outgoing treasurer, as well as Sarah Lukowski, our outgoing outreach officer.

Please join me in welcoming the new roster of executive committee members for the 2020–2022 term:

- Chair: Ryan Lee
- Secretary: Remy Huerta-Stemper
- Directors: James Carr, Liz Danielson, Paul Farseth, Hallie Finucane, Darlene Guy, Katrina Lee, Ruth Ellen Luehr, Eric Meyer, Chris Schweizer, Theresa St. Aoro, and Priscilla Wyeth

We appreciate them stepping up to serve in this year of uncertainty and virtual meetings. In addition, Remy Huerta-Stemper and Lori-Anne Williams will be serving as delegates to the CD4 Executive Committee, and Paul Farseth and Katrina Lee are delegates to the CD4 Central Committee. Our delegates to the State Central Committee (SCC) are Paul Farseth, Hallie Finucane, Paul Schroeder, Theresa St. Aoro, and Gwen Willems, with Katrina Lee as an alternate to the SCC.

Where do we go from here? The number one thing that we are all called to do is vote and elect candidates who are committed to promoting social justice and equity. Voting by mail is the safest option, and you can request your absentee ballot here: <http://mnvotebymail.org/register/>. Please reach out to at least one other neighbor to encourage them to vote. If you are called to do more, please reach out to Mary Diermeier with the coordinated campaign if you would like to be involved in state- and national-level campaigns or Melissa Jamrock with MN Vote by Mail if you would like to do more work on a local level. Mary can be reached at [mdiermeier@df.org](mailto:mdiermeier@df.org) or (612) 460-1094, while Melissa is taking volunteer information at <https://mnvotebymail.org/>. Both offer campaign volunteer opportunities that can be done from home.

Thank you for all that you do and for your support in these difficult times.

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## CALENDAR

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*SD66 DFL is continuing to hold its meetings remotely until further notice. Zoom links and instructions will be posted at [sd66-dfl.org](http://sd66-dfl.org) prior to the meeting dates. See <https://zoom.us/>*

**Monday, August 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Budget Subcommittee Meeting

**Tuesday, August 4, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, August 11, 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.**  
Primary Election

**Tuesday, August 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

**Saturday, August 29**  
State Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, September 1, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Monday, September 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, September 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

**Monday, October 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, October 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, October 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

**Monday, November 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, November 3, 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.**  
General Election  
Vote in person if you have not already voted by mail.

**Tuesday, November 3, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, November 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
SD66 DFL Happy Hour

Visit our website at <http://sd66-dfl.org/> for calendar updates.

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**Rep. John Lesch**  
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The *Senate District 66 DFL Newsletter* is published four times a year to inform and educate all interested parties in the activities and issues of SD66 DFLers including elected officials and endorsed candidates. Please contact the editor if you are interested in joining the newsletter committee or submitting an article for publication.

### Newsletter committee

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