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GOVERNOR WENDELL R. ANDERSON SPECIAL MESSAGE

ETHICS IN STATE GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATIVE REFORM:
TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF A NEW DAY

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STATE OF MINNESOTA



To the 67th Session
of the Legislature of Minnesota

March 23, 1971

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Where human institutions are concerned, love without criticism brings stagnation, and criticism without love brings destruction. The swifter the pace of change, the more lovingly men must care for and criticize their institutions to keep them intact through the turbulent passages.

--John W. Gardner

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STATE OF MINNESOTA

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Members of the 67th Session of the Minnesota Legislature, and fellow citizens of Minnesota:

Any critic approaches the questions of government ethics and legislative reform with some trepidation. Ethics and reform are, of course, proper concerns of any branch of government. Some might suggest that a governor would do well to respect the separation of powers and look to his own needs in the executive branch.

But ethical behavior in all of public life should be a matter of importance to each of us in public life.

Certainly it is a matter of importance to the people who delegate to us the responsibility to govern themselves. And separation of powers suggests that the executive and legislative branches should look at one another critically but constructively, in order to make state government as a whole as effective as it can be in serving the people.

It is the people, after all, for whom government exists -- your constituents and mine. Nothing destroys their faith in us so quickly as the belief, or even the suspicion, that a public official has placed his personal interests ahead of theirs. Nothing makes the people more cynical than bad laws or faltering responses to their needs from the government established to serve them. To the extent that the system lacks standards for ethical behavior and tolerates weaknesses in the law-making process, we contribute to that cynicism and loss of faith.

As an active participant in the processes of law-making and government, the governor also has a stake in how well the Legislature functions. He recommends budgets and programs for legislative consideration. He signs -- or does not sign -- legislation into law. He must carry out the actions of the Legislature through his executive departments.

In view of these very fundamental relationships between the legislative and the executive branches, I believe it is my responsibility to give some executive attention to the legislative process. During last fall's campaign, I promised the people of Minnesota that I would do so; my personal interest in this subject, of course, goes back much further than that.

In my Inaugural Address, I expressed my conviction that the conduct of public officials in all three branches of Minnesota government reflects a very high level of honesty and integrity, and I called upon all of us to describe our high standards by statute for all to see and measure our performance by them.

In my brief experience as Governor, I have found nothing to lessen my deep admiration for the Legislature specifically and state government generally that extends through 12 years of public life. It is in that spirit that I make my recommendations today: to declare publicly our high standards of behavior and to make a good legislature even better.

A CODE OF ETHICS FOR STATE GOVERNMENT

Our proud and honorable tradition of citizen participation in politics and government in Minnesota has rarely been marred by unethical conduct, either in the elective process or in the administration of government and justice.

Nevertheless, questions of the conduct of some legislators received considerable attention during last year's campaigns, and memories of alleged unethical conduct among public officials in the state are recent enough so that we are all conscious of them.

Those suspicions of bad judgment cast an unfortunate cloud over the Legislature and state government generally, weakening the public confidence that is so essential to effective governance. It is the very high level of honesty and integrity in our government that makes it critical for us to avoid even the appearance or suspicion of misconduct.

More than half of the states now have codes of ethics established to guide the behavior of members of one or more branches of their governments, and most of those codes have been adopted since 1967. Minnesota has had a

code of ethics and a commission on ethics since the Freeman administration, but no effective use has ever been made of them.

Legislative Ethics

Most legislators agree, I believe, that it is time to act forcefully and that the way to act is to adopt a tough code of ethics. For the Legislature, the difficult task of framing a proper code is made even more difficult by the part-time nature of legislative offices. As long as lawmakers must depend on other income for their livelihoods, potential conflicts of interest will present themselves regularly.

The ultimate remedy for unethical behavior among elected officials lies with the electorate, but the electorate must have adequate information for their decisions. A code of ethics for legislators should therefore have two basic elements:

First, a standard of conduct which can serve as a guide to legislators and provide a standard by which their constituents can judge them;

Second, a means of disclosing important information on which accurate judgments can be based.

To accomplish these two purposes, I propose that the legislature adopt a statutory code of ethics containing the following provisions:

1. The code should clearly define the high standard of conduct we have a right to expect from elected representatives. It should emphasize that elective office is a public trust, and that any effort to realize personal gain through official conduct is a violation of that trust.

2. The code should state that a legislator is considered to have a personal interest in conflict with the proper discharge of his duties if he has reason to expect that he will experience direct monetary gain or loss in his non-legislative capacity by reason of his official activity. He should not be considered to have such a personal interest, however, if the benefit or detriment affects him no more greatly than it affects other members of a business classification, profession, occupation, or other group to which he belongs.

3. The code should prohibit a legislator from soliciting or receiving anything of value, including a favor or service, based on any understanding that his vote or judgment would be influenced thereby, or where it could

reasonably be inferred that the thing of value would influence the legislator in the discharge of his duties, or as a reward.

4. The code should prohibit a legislator from disclosing confidential information gained by reason of his official position that could result in financial gain for himself or any other person, from accepting outside payment for his legislative advice or assistance, and from entering into any contract with a state agency unless there have been public notice and competitive bidding.

5. The code should require a legislator to disclose publicly the full nature of any substantial and direct personal interest he judges that he may have in any pending legislation. He should be required to file a disclosure statement with the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate before committee action is taken if he is a member of the committee hearing the bill, or before final floor action if the bill is not heard in one of his committees. In either case, the legislator should be required to ask to be excused from voting on such legislation, with automatic granting of such requests.

6. The code should prohibit a legislator from appearing before any state regulatory department or agency for a fee if the legislator serves on a committee or appro-

priations subcommittee which has direct responsibility for that department or agency, with the exception of appearance on behalf of a client at specifically judicial and semi-judicial proceedings -- for example, the Tax Court and the Workmen's Compensation Commission. This step will relieve regulatory agencies of any possible effects from the appearance by the lawyer-legislator who has a voice in determining the agencies' budgets, authority, or salary schedules.

7. The code should provide for public disclosure of financial interests of legislators and legislative candidates, with reasonable protection of privacy. Specifically, I believe that any candidate for the Legislature should be required to disclose at least the following information within twenty days of filing for election:

a. The name of any corporation, firm or enterprise subject to the jurisdiction of a regulatory agency in which he or his spouse has a direct financial interest in excess of \$1,000. Insurance policies and bank accounts should not be considered such interests.

b. Any office or directorships held by him or his spouse in a corporation, firm, or enterprise subject to the jurisdiction of a state regulatory agency.

c. The name of any person, corporation, government agency, firm, partnership, or other business association from which he received compensation in excess of \$1,000 during the preceding two years, consistent with the protection of privileged relationships as described in Minnesota law.

d. The legal description of all real property in Minnesota in which he directly or indirectly acquired any interest whatever during the previous two years, including an option to buy, that is valued in excess of \$1,000.

The penalty for intentional violation of the disclosure requirements should be placed at the misdemeanor level.

This proposed statutory code of ethics is by no means fool-proof; there is no way to provide absolute assurances of ethical behavior. But these provisions, in my judgment, will do much to identify actual and potential conflicts of interest for legislators and their constituents. I believe they are consistent with the general expectations that Minnesotans and their legislators set for public performance. What is proposed here is essentially a codification of the high ethical standards presently followed by the vast majority of our state legislators.

At least ten states presently require some form of public disclosure of legislators' financial interests, and the trend appears to be clearly in this direction. I hope that Minnesota will be in the forefront of that trend.

Executive and Judicial Ethics

Legislative ethics may receive the lion's share of public attention, but real and potential conflicts of interest are not limited to that branch of government. The Legislature should address itself to statutory standards and disclosure provisions in the executive and judicial branches as well.

1. The high standards of conduct we expect from members of the judiciary and executive officials should be defined, just as I recommend they be defined for legislators.

2. All state constitutional officers, state department heads, full-time legislative employees, full-time employees of the office of the Governor, Supreme Court judges, district court judges, and full-time municipal judges should be required to file statements of outside income with the Secretary of State, listing the sources of all outside income in excess of \$500 received during the previous two calendar years and listing all investments in excess of \$1,000. The Secretary of State should have the

responsibility for seeing that each statement is brought up to date on a biennial basis.

3. Candidates for constitutional office should be required to file a disclosure statement similar to the statement outlined for legislative candidates.

An Ethics Commission for State Government

In order to carry out standards for ethical behavior, review complaints, issue advisory opinions upon request, conduct appropriate hearings and investigations, recommend legal action when warranted, recommend further statutory action on the basis of its experience, and publicize findings of unethical behavior in any branch of state government, the Legislature should create a permanent ethics commission.

Representation on the commission should be distributed among the various branches of government and the general public. I recommend that the commission include four legislators appointed by the Legislature, one from each caucus in the House and Senate; four judges appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, with one member of the Court and two members from the district and municipal judiciary; four officials from the executive branch, appointed

by the governor; and three citizens in no way connected with state government, appointed by the governor. The chairman should be appointed by the governor from the citizen membership.

The commission should be required to meet regularly, be given subpoena powers, and be authorized to call upon the Attorney General for staff and investigative assistance for that portion of its work that requires investigative activity.

Its initial charge should be to report back to the 1973 Legislature with a recommended code of ethics for all officials and employees of the state, including those of the University of Minnesota, based on statutory and other codes which are now in effect in Minnesota and elsewhere. The Department of Administration, for example, operates under statutory conflict-of-interest requirements, and some other agencies have adopted codes of ethics for some of their employees.

The commission should also be assigned the task of creating and recommending statutory codes of ethics for local public officials and improving the laws and procedures relating to campaign contributions and campaign expenditures.

I hope that my recommendations concerning a code of ethics for state government provide adequate evidence of the importance I assign to this area of concern. I believe we must act forcefully this session, and I believe my recommendations will provide reasonable and effective safeguards against public abuse of public trust.

REFORMING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Every Minnesota legislative session differs from the one before it.

Memberships change. Proportions of majority and minority members change. Issues that come before the Legislature change as the problems of the state change and relationships change among state, federal, and local governments. Governors change, and the relationships between the executive and legislative branches adjust as a result.

All of these changes flow from the people, who make decisions about their representation and seek new laws on the basis of their assessments of their needs and the needs of others. The needs of the people change with the world in which we all live.

Today's Minnesota Legislature is therefore strikingly different from the Minnesota Legislature of a century ago, or even a decade ago. Computers, television, freeways, metropolitan government, taconite, and the emerging drug culture are only six of the influences that have affected our Legislature in some significant way since 1960, for example.

So change is no stranger to the Minnesota Legislature and its processes. It has had to respond throughout its history to the changing needs of the people of our state and the forces which affect their lives.

In the interest of making our government more responsive to the people and more imaginative in the service of their needs, I am recommending today a number of changes in addition to those which have been made over the years in our legislative machinery and processes. Most of them have been proposed before. The requirements for putting them into effect range from amending the Minnesota Constitution to changing the rules of operation in one house or the other. Together they constitute a package of legislative reforms that will, in my judgment, strengthen a good Legislature by making it more effective in carrying out its responsibilities, more open to the people who elect its members, and fairer to its members and the people they represent.

Flexible Sessions and Better Scheduling of Workload

Nearly everyone agrees that the Legislature does not have sufficient time in which to do its work. But the time problem is not the only barrier to effective handling of the responsibilities of the Legislature.

The Legislature has had a difficult time throughout its history in budgeting accurately for a two-year period; opportunities are needed to review budget and revenue estimates more frequently and make necessary adjustments.

In addition, the increasing complexity of state and federal relationships, unanticipated new federal programs, elimination of federal programs, and sudden economic shifts all require more prompt legislative responses than are now possible.

Finally, the Legislature remains perennially understaffed because so many competent people are understandably reluctant to leave their present positions for a five-month session. The Legislature, on the other hand, is understandably reluctant as well to hire the number of full-time people it would take to serve its need adequately during the five months it is in session during each two-year period.

The Supreme Court has made it clear that an amendment to the Constitution is required to change the schedule for legislative sessions. The question is how to amend it in such a way that the needs of Minnesota can be served ten or twenty years from now without further amendments.

I therefore recommend an amendment to the Constitution which allows the Legislature to determine by law how frequently and how long it should meet. Under such a provision the 1973 Legislature, for example, might decide to set a 1975 session of 60 days during the first year of the biennium and 60 days during the second year. Or it might decide on some other schedule, recognizing that the session can be changed by law to meet future needs. Such an amendment would leave the Legislature with many options, and would also be a means of providing for a smooth and gradual transition to a full-time Legislature when that becomes desirable. I believe full-time sessions will soon become necessary, but are not yet needed.

Such an amendment would also allow the Legislature to organize a session for more effective use of the days allowed. For example, the Legislature could decide to meet briefly for organizational purposes and introduction of bills, then recess for committee hearings and reconvene for action on committee reports. This flexibility, entirely lacking under present Constitutional restrictions, is essential for productive and efficient use of legislators' time and proper staffing of the Legislature.

The Legislature should also take other steps to spread its work more evenly over whatever time period it is allowed.

As I observed in my constitutional message earlier this month, there is no greater travesty of the legislative process than the events which are crammed into the final hectic days of every session. It is not uncommon to pass as many as 200 bills on a single day near the end of most sessions. Deliberately or by default, the Legislature passes some measures -- the 1967 sales and property tax measure, for example -- under such pressures that might not stand up under close and careful scrutiny in a more orderly process and which have effects that are often neither discussed nor understood. Obviously, no legislator can meet his responsibilities in the face of such avalanches of legislation.

To correct this problem, I propose:

1. That the Legislature establish much earlier deadlines for the introduction of bills, certainly no later than the mid-point of each session and preferably even earlier;
2. That the Legislature establish a deadline for committee action at least three weeks before the end of each session, in order to leave most of the time for those final weeks available for floor consideration of committee reports;

3. That the Legislature establish a deadline for conference committee reports, later than the deadline for committee action but allowing time in those final weeks for better floor consideration of conference actions. The earlier deadline for committee action described above, in my judgment, would make the conference committee work easier by improving floor debate of the issues that must be settled in conference.

These are measures which the Legislature can take without amending the Constitution, and I recommend they be instituted for the next session of the Legislature. Some could yet be adopted for this session.

Other states have found such deadlines helpful. In Illinois, for example, the percentage of bills passed during the final two weeks dropped from 57 percent to 23 percent after deadlines were adopted.

A Smaller Legislature by 1983

Minnesota presently has the largest state senate in the nation and one of the largest houses.

I am convinced by my own experience in the Legislature that the unusual size of the Legislature in Minnesota makes it cumbersome, and it is certainly true

that other states are able to carry out their legislative responsibilities with fewer members and, in one case, with fewer houses.

At the same time, however, a large legislature unquestionably brings government closer to its people because of its smaller constituencies. This is an especially important consideration when state legislators, as in Minnesota, are part-time public servants.

As a practical matter, a legislature is not likely to reduce its own size voluntarily and thereby eliminate some of its members from office. Even though there are many legislators each session who choose not to run again, the Minnesota pattern has been to increase the size of the Legislature almost every time legislative districts are reapportioned.

For those reasons, it will be difficult to reduce the size of the Legislature during the reapportionment process that is ahead of us. As our legislative sessions become longer and spread over the biennium, however, as I recommend they should, we will face the eventual necessity of a full-time Legislature. I believe that need is no longer than a decade away, and we should plan for it now.

I therefore recommend that the Legislature take steps to accomplish a reduction in the size of the Legislature.

First, I recommend that the Legislature reduce its membership, if at all possible, during the coming legislative reapportionment.

Second, I recommend that the 1971 Legislature adopt legislation providing that, after the next reapportionment in 1981, the Minnesota Senate and the Minnesota House of Representatives shall be no larger than two-thirds their present sizes. These numbers are typical across the nation, even for part-time legislatures.

Obviously, such a law could be repealed or amended by the 1981 Legislature, but to do so would require an action of the Legislature and the consent of the Governor. Short of a constitutional convention, which I hope will meet before 1981 but may not, this seems to me to be the only practical method of eventually reducing the size of our Legislature, and it is also a relatively painless one for present members.

Party Designation

The Minnesota Legislature is a partisan body, in spite of the long-standing fiction of Minnesota political life that we have a nonpartisan legislature.

Such nonpartisanship is an illusion, as the practices of the Legislature make clear. No parliamentary body in a democratic society can operate without some form of partisan organization, and the Minnesota Legislature is no exception. Every single member of the Legislature is presently affiliated with either the DFL or Conservative caucus in the house in which he serves. The result of pretending otherwise is simply confusion of the voters.

As the League of Women Voters has so accurately pointed out, "The overriding unanswerable argument for party designation is simply what goes on at the Legislature. For ten years or more the parties have lined up candidates in all possible districts; endorsed them openly in friendly districts, quietly in others; financed them a lot or a little, according to the candidates' need and party resources; helped them campaign locally and from state headquarters; been closely concerned with caucus organization; helped with research and public relations throughout the session."

What is really at issue here is the voters' right to know the political affiliation of legislative candidates they are being asked to support. Admittedly, there are many factors that voters must consider in making their decisions

at the polls, but certainly the caucus intention of the candidate is one of them. Identifying political affiliations of legislators and legislative candidates is one more way of insuring the openness of the legislative process.

Approximately 70 percent of the Minnesota electorate consider themselves either DFLers or Republicans; the political affiliation of the candidates is important to these voters. Minnesota Polls have shown consistently in the last decade that most Minnesotans strongly support party designation on the ballot; in January of this year it was favored better than 2 to 1, with 63 percent for the proposal and only 30 percent against.

If a voter knows nothing else about the candidates he is asked to elect, he should at least have the opportunity of knowing their political affiliations. A more responsive and more representative Legislature will be the result.

I recommend that the 1971 Legislature enact legislation that will provide for legislative candidates to seek office with party identification in primary and general elections. The discarding of the nonpartisan fiction is long overdue, and I hope this Legislature will finally recognize political reality.

A Revised Committee Structure

One of the most serious problems in our legislative process is the unusually large number of committees existing in both houses, and consequently the large number of committee assignments each member must handle.

The number of committees has too often been determined by the number of senior majority members who feel they are entitled to committee chairmanships, and not on the basis of legislative need or efficiency.

At present, members are assigned as many as seven committees. They simply cannot keep up with the work load of each committee; in some instances they cannot even attend all the meetings of committees to which they are assigned because of scheduling conflicts.

I propose that the legislature severely reduce the number of its standing committees in both houses and also reduce the number of committees assigned each member. To cut the number of existing committees almost in half, to about a dozen, would not be unreasonable. Each member should be assigned no more than three and preferably two committees.

Such a reduction would allow greater concentration on specific areas of concern for most lawmakers; it would

also permit them to develop a valuable expertise in these areas over the years. The final result, I am confident, would be a much more orderly and thoughtful legislative process.

In addition, I recommend that both houses develop parallel committee structures. The present differences in committee structure confuse the average citizen who tries to follow a bill through the Legislature. A parallel structure would also allow more joint meetings and hearings than are presently possible. Most legislatures use joint meetings to a much greater extent than Minnesota; it is a sound way to make better use of valuable time and resources and to coordinate the actions of the two houses more effectively.

Finally, I recommend that the Legislature define accurately the role, scope, and procedures of subcommittees, which have been used increasingly in recent years without adequate development of their specific responsibilities. Subcommittees should be required to provide adequate notice of meeting times and places, and they should establish more formal procedures in the interest of adequate participation by legislators, witnesses, and constituents.

Rights of Minority Members

Throughout most of the state's history, the minority caucuses in the Minnesota Legislature have enjoyed few of the rights, privileges or protections which they are given in most other legislative bodies. Instead, they have existed completely at the mercy of the majority's benevolence. This has been due in large part to the non-partisan fiction which the Legislature insists on perpetuating: in a nonpartisan legislature there is no majority and no minority and therefore there are no minority rights to be concerned about, or so the rationale goes.

In recent years the Legislature has made a modest beginning in correcting the unfair treatment traditionally shown the minority, at least by providing more staff help. Much more needs to be done.

First, I recommend that the minority caucuses be granted representation on each standing committee in proportion to their membership in each house, according to a predetermined formula like the one used in the United States Congress.

Second, I recommend that the minority caucuses in both houses be permitted to make their own assignments of members to the committees, in accordance with the formula described above.

Third, I recommend that proportional amounts of staff assistance, physical facilities, and other legislative resources be made available to minority members, both as individuals and as groups.

The majority caucuses already enjoy enormous advantages in carrying on the business of the Legislature, through their control of the committee structures and the legislative apparatus. They operate in a partisan way, regardless of the nonpartisan myth. The changes I recommend will enable the system to operate in a more balanced way and ensure that the voters who elect state legislators will be represented in an equitable way.

Open Procedures to Help Legislators and Interested
Citizens

A legislative body is only as effective as the confidence it instills in those it represents. That confidence, in turn, depends largely on openness and integrity in the procedures by which elected representatives conduct the public's business, and on making information about legislative actions available to interested citizens.

Unfortunately, too many of the procedures of the Minnesota Legislature have the effect, whether intended or not, of obscuring specific legislative actions from other

legislators, interested citizens, and reporters who cover the Legislature.

Sometimes they must make special and time-consuming efforts to obtain information which should be readily available; in many cases the information is simply unobtainable because official actions were conducted in secret or because no permanent record of them was ever made. Such procedures are inexcusable in a free democratic institution like the state legislature.

I propose that the Legislature take the following actions to correct this situation:

1. Ensure that all legislative committees, including the rules committees in both houses, be required to meet in open session when conducting official legislative business;

2. Ensure that votes taken in the Committee of the Whole, where a bill's final shape if not its ultimate destiny is determined, are recorded in the daily journals when requested by any ten members;

3. Ensure that all floor sessions are tape recorded, the tapes to be kept by the Clerk of the House and Secretary of the Senate for the balance of the biennium and copies thereof to be made available to the public upon request, at a reasonable cost, and thereafter to be turned over to the Historical Society;

4. Ensure that committee votes and tape recordings of all committee sessions be maintained at least during the balance of each biennium.

I further recommend that the Legislature strengthen and make statutory the rules it has already adopted relating to lobbyist registration and disclosure. The identifications, interests, and expenditures of those who seek to influence legislation are as important for legislators and citizens to know as information on specific legislative actions. It is as important to disclose these interests as it is to disclose the potential conflict of interest of legislators themselves, as I recommended in the first section of this message.

These procedural changes will go far toward building greater confidence among citizens in our legislative process, by providing information which it is their right to know.

Better Compensation of Legislators

Most citizens agree, I believe, that they want the ablest possible people to represent them in the Legislature. Certainly the work of the Legislature demands the best abilities we have.

To achieve the best representation, most would also agree, legislative service should be within the reach of

anyone who wants to run. Yet, like most states, the compensation Minnesota gives its lawmakers requires many of them to serve at a severe personal sacrifice. Every year we lose many gifted and dedicated veteran legislators because they feel they can no longer ask their families to sacrifice for the sake of their public service.

This should not be the case in a democratic society that depends on citizen participation in government. Legislative compensation should be high enough so that any citizen from any walk of life is able to serve and still support his family as well as he could if he did not serve. It should also be high enough so that any legislator can resist the temptation to cut his expenses by being a regular guest of those who seek to influence his vote.

It is impossible, of course, to build quality in by paying better salaries to legislators; only the voters can provide good legislators. But it is possible to do more to keep from shutting out those who could contribute or could continue to contribute to the quality of our Legislature if the financial burden of doing so were reduced.

I believe that this financial problem will become even more severe as we increase the amount of work legislators

are required to do and the time they must spend on their official duties during and between sessions. The interim business, the constituent problems, the regular meetings with constituent groups, the need to stay informed on committee problems and general concerns -- all of these activities and others consume an enormous amount of time for any conscientious legislator, and most are very conscientious. This means time spent away from job, farm, or profession; time which is largely uncompensated under the present salary provision for legislators.

Occasionally legislative salaries are criticized for being too high, and the legislative process is criticized for being too expensive. In my opinion, such criticisms are uninformed and irresponsible. Our legislators are poorly compensated and our legislative process is economical.

Very few persons seek legislative office in order to make money -- at least very few seek it a second time for that purpose. It costs money to serve in our Legislature. There are much more effective ways of increasing income.

At the same time, the total cost of operating the Legislature is a very small portion of the state's budget -- about three-tenths of one percent, or approximately one

dollar per citizen per year, for the vital deliberative process that determines the way in which the state finally will meet and finance the needs and wishes of our people for government services. A relatively small state expenditure would do much to maintain and improve the attractiveness of legislative office for capable legislators and candidates.

I therefore recommend that the \$4,800 annual salary now paid Minnesota state legislators be increased by the present Legislature.

No doubt there will be a further need to increase legislative salaries as we change the scheduling of our sessions and spread the work load over a greater length of time. We would be foolish to take structural steps to improve the effectiveness of the legislative process and make the Legislature unavailable to capable men and women in the process.

In considering such future increases, it would be wise, in my judgment, for recommendations to come from some qualified non-legislative source. I suggest that the Legislature give consideration to establishing a special non-legislative group for this purpose, as was recently established to recommend changes in executive and administrative salaries.

Single-Member House Districts

Historically some members of the Minnesota House of Representatives have been elected from single-member districts while others have been elected from dual-member districts. The original justifications for this split practice are obscure; whatever they were, they have long since disappeared.

In recent reapportionments the Legislature has reduced the number of dual-member districts, yet fifteen remain: nine in Minneapolis, three in St. Louis County, one each in Washington, Olmsted, and Otter Tail Counties.

The members of the Legislature ought to be elected all one way or all another way, but not in different ways. There is a value in uniformity here. Moreover, representation of constituents is diluted in dual-member districts. I urge you to eliminate them once and for all when you reapportion.

SUMMARY

In this special message on ethics in state government and legislative reform, I have recommended:

1. Development of a legislative code of ethics, including disclosure of financial interests by legislative candidates, in order to identify existing and potential conflicts of interest.

2. Development of codes of ethics for the executive and judicial branches of government, including public disclosure of outside income and other financial interests on a biennial basis and the filing of disclosure statements by candidates for constitutional offices.

3. Establishment of a statutory ethics commission representing each branch of government and the general public, to review complaints and issue advisory opinions and recommendations for further legislative and executive action.

4. A constitutional amendment enabling the Legislature to schedule its session flexibly over the biennium, in order to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the legislative process.

5. Establishment of earlier legislative deadlines for the introduction of bills, completion of committee activity on legislation, and conference committee reports, in order to enable fuller legislative discussion of important proposals.

6. Action by this session of the Legislature to cut the size of the Minnesota Senate and the size of the Minnesota House of Representatives in the present legislative reapportionment, if possible, and to mandate a reduction by one-third in each house after the next reapportionment in 1981.

7. Legislation to provide party designation for legislative candidates in primary and general elections.

8. Reduction of the number of standing committees in both houses of the Legislature and committee assignments given each member, development of parallel committee structures in the two houses, and better definition of the responsibilities and procedures of legislative subcommittees.

9. Proportional representation of members of minority caucuses on legislative committees, assignment of minority members to committees by the minority caucuses, and provision of proportional staff, space, and other resources to minority members and caucuses.

10. Open meetings of all legislative committees considering official business, recording in legislative journals of votes in the Committee of the Whole whenever ten members request it, and sound tape recording of all floor sessions and committee sessions of the Legislature, so that appropriate records of legislative activity are available.

11. Strengthened, statutory provision for registration of lobbyists and disclosure of their interests and expenditures.

12. Increased salaries for legislators, to keep the Legislature open to candidacy and membership citizens.

13. Elimination of the 15 dual-member legislative districts that still remain in the state, to provide better representation for constituents of those districts in the House of Representatives.

No doubt some of these proposals will find wide support among legislators while others will be more controversial. All of them are offered seriously and sincerely, in order to strengthen our legislative system by making it more effective and more responsive to the public.

I am convinced that there is a widespread wish among our people to modernize our legislative process and

make it more effective in meeting the changing needs of the state and the desire for information of our sophisticated electorate. I hope that together we can respond to that desire.

I believe every recommendation made here is worthy of passage by this Legislature. If these recommendations are adopted, we will do much to modernize our legislative structure and make our state government more responsive to the people and more imaginative in the service of their needs.