



# TARA MACK

## State Representative

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### Legislative Update

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Hello from St. Paul!

As we work through the final weekend of session, the \$3 billion budget deficit has yet to be solved. The legislature must adjourn by midnight Sunday, so we have our work cut out for us over the next two days.

Last week, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled against the unallotments Gov. Pawlenty used to balance the budget last year. The suit, supported by the majority party, pushed the current deficit beyond the \$3 billion mark.

On Monday, Legislative leadership successfully passed a budget bill that would raise taxes by more than \$400 million. The bill would give Minnesota the fifth highest income tax rate in the nation and raise taxes on small businesses.

I voted against this proposal because raising taxes on families and small businesses in a down economy hampers recovery efforts. Almost 60% of the increased tax revenue would have come from small businesses. These business owners could be using this money to increase wages, retain employees or bring on new ones. We need to focus on job growth while making sure to not hinder the people who can create those jobs.



The bill also does nothing to combat the long-term deficit, projected at \$5.8 billion. It institutes one-time cuts, but the tax increases are permanent. I've said many times, and I will continue to say: We need long-term, structural reforms to keep us from ending up in the same situation year after year. Fortunately, Gov. Pawlenty vetoed this bill.

In other news, the House recently passed a K-12 Education bill, but it looks to be dead in the Senate because the priorities are misguided. The price tag is simply unaffordable, and the bill offers no way to pay for itself. The bill keeps control in the hands of folks in St. Paul rather than returning it to the local school district level. I believe that the Legislature needs to do what it can to return more control over to the local school officials who are close to the wants and needs of the people who elected them. We need to move bills forward that reduce mandates on schools and allow them the freedom to make the best decisions on behalf of the district.

As we head into the final hours of session, we must work together to solve this problem without increasing the tax burden on Minnesota families and small businesses. I am hopeful for positive end of session negotiations so the Legislature can finish its work on time.

Please continue to call and e-mail with your thoughts on the issues we face. You can also connect to me on Facebook.

Sincerely,

Tara

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AND BURNSVILLE