



Conservation Connection



A Minnesota Legislative Outdoor Newsletter: Created by Kim Scott and Alexandra David

**Sponsored by: Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club,
Fish Lake Conservation Club, Izaak Walton League, MN Musky and Pike Alliance,
MN Sharptail Grouse Society, Outdoor News, Pheasants Forever, Sportsmen for the BWCA***

February 7, 2025

Important Dates:

- Monday, March 31, 2025: Legislative break for Eid
- Tuesday, March 11, 2025: District 40B Special Election
- April 11, 2025 at 12:00 PM - April 21, 2025 at 12:00 PM: Legislative break for Easter and Passover
- May 9-10: 77th Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener in Crosslake
- May 19: Constitutional deadline for adjournment for the 2025 Legislative Session

Minnesota House returns to work for first time in 2025: DFL, Republicans convene first House floor session of the year with power-sharing pact in place. For the second time in a month, Republican Lisa Demuth stood at the front of the Minnesota House on Thursday to be recognized as its newly elected speaker. But instead of a half-empty chamber, the room was full — and this time, her election was legitimate . . . Democrats returned to the chamber after a nearly four-week boycott under an agreement that will give the two parties shared power over the next two years. Both sides said key concessions moved the needle and ended the impasse . . . Under the deal, Republicans will chair all House committees for the next month while they hold a 67-66 advantage. A March 11 special election for a safely blue Roseville-area seat is expected to bring the chamber to a tie. Once the House is evenly divided, Democrats and Republicans will co-chair the committees. Hortman, who served as House speaker for the past six years, said she conceded the speakership in order to get a deal that included co-chairs on committees and an agreement to seat Rep. Brad Tabke, DFL-Shakopee. [Read more.](#)

House DFL, Republicans strike power-sharing deal: [The agreement](#) includes:

- [Rep. Lisa Demuth](#) (R-Cold Spring) will be Speaker of the House for the biennium, the first female Republican and first Black person to hold the position;
- Republicans will chair committees unless the House is tied, at which point there would be co-chairs and co-vice-chairs;
- Republicans will immediately have a one-seat advantage in committee membership, but committees will have equal party representation when the House has equal party membership. The lone

***You are receiving this legislative newsletter free of charge. It is being sponsored and funded by the above-listed organizations. If your organization would like to be a sponsor of this newsletter, please call Greg Kvale at 218-232-0328 to discuss a donation.**

exception is that the House Fraud Prevention and State Agency Oversight Policy Committee will have a 5-3 Republican advantage;

- the House must only appoint an even number of members to conference committees divided equally between the caucuses;
- shared decision-making on any administrative or nonpartisan functions, including member appointments to boards and commissions;
- [Rep. Brad Tabke](#) (DFL-Shakopee), whose [14-vote win](#) in District 54A was upheld by a judge, will be seated. [Read more.](#)

Note: Speaker Demuth will have some checks on her authority: 68 votes will be needed to remove or unseat a member so neither side can take advantage of a one-seat majority, and each leader decides excused members and remote voting. Notably, the House Fraud and Agency Oversight Committee will have a GOP chair and a GOP majority, but the GOP will not have the 2/3rds majority needed to approve subpoenas. [via Peter Callahan](#), Minnpost.

Special election in District 40B set for March 11: [Gov. Tim Walz](#) issued a [writ of special election](#) Wednesday that sets Tuesday, March 11 as the date for a special election to fill the vacant District 40B House seat. The result will either produce a 67-all tie in House membership or increase a Republican advantage to 68-66. Curtis Johnson [won the seat](#) by more than 30% at the Nov. 5 election; however, a district judge ruled in December the DFL candidate did not meet the residency requirement to serve the district. A special primary election for nomination of candidates, should one be necessary, would be held Feb. 25. [Read more.](#)

Doron Clark is sworn in to Senate, restoring DFL's one-seat majority: Doron Clark, the [winner of last week's Senate District 60 special election](#) in Minneapolis, took the oath of office on Monday, [returning a one-seat majority](#) to the DFL. [Read more.](#)

Minnesota Senate overturned the power-sharing agreement and elected Sen. Bobby Joe Champion as President of the Senate along party lines. DFL [Sen. Doron Clark](#) fills the seat left vacant by [the death of Kari Dziedzic](#), the Democrats' former leader, who died in late December after a battle with cancer. He now represents Senate District 60, which covers northeastern parts of Minneapolis. Until Clark's election, the chamber was tied 33 to 33. Leaders of both parties came to a power-sharing agreement at the dawn of session to organize the chamber and work during the first few weeks before the special election. There were DFL and GOP co-chairs of committees and two presiding officers filling in the Senate president's role from each party. But that deal dissolved on Monday. Along party lines, the chamber passed a resolution to undo the terms of that agreement since Democrats now have a majority. [Read more.](#)

Minnesota GOP released a statement clarifying that they will continue to pursue recall elections against DFLers who boycotted the legislative session (see [statement](#)): GOP party leaders said at a press conference Tuesday that they are currently working to collect 25 signatures per seat and plan to file at least some of the

petitions by next Monday. The state Supreme Court would decide if the grounds for a recall are invalid. If approved, a recall election date would then be set. [Read more.](#)

MN senator wants to make it legal to eat beavers again: Under state law, homeowners are allowed to trap or kill beavers that are causing damage to their property. However, you are not allowed to poison the animals and you must notify a conservation officer if you kill a beaver. Beavers can be a nuisance when populations become too large, cutting down trees and flooding areas with dams. The DNR notes that a single beaver can cut down hundreds of trees each year. "Minnesota has a regulated beaver trapping season, but there are not enough trappers to keep some beaver populations small enough to prevent problems," a DNR website explains. "Beaver are valuable, especially when considering their economic importance for fur. Minnesota trappers take 20,000 to 30,000 surplus beaver most years." Eating nuisance beavers was legal until the law was changed in 2024 as part of the environment omnibus bill . . . It's worth noting the ban strangely only appears to apply to nuisance beavers. Beavers trapped otherwise are still fair game. Under [a bill proposed last week](#), Senator Grant Hauschild (DFL-Hermantown) is proposing to remove a line from the statute that bars "human consumption of a retained beaver." [Read more.](#)

DNR must consider anew whether to study massive pool of mine waste above Lake Superior, court rules: The Minnesota Court of Appeals handed environmental groups a win in their continuing legal fight against the [expansion of a massive pond for mining waste](#) three miles from Lake Superior. The appellate ruling said the Department of Natural Resources was too quick to reject a comprehensive study of the basin, which holds more than 40 years' worth of mine waste near Silver Bay. Now, DNR must again consider whether to conduct an environmental impact statement (EIS), the review that environmental groups sought because of the potential for catastrophic pollution if one of the dams at the Milepost 7 site breaks. The advocacy group WaterLegacy argued that the state could not rely on the review it completed before the basin was constructed in the 1970s. The court agreed, writing that DNR made a decision that was "arbitrary and capricious" and that the agency had made a legal error in its justification to skip the EIS. The ruling does not require DNR to do the study, only to determine anew whether it's necessary.

Cities ponder how to deal with tree infestations: While St. Paul and other more populated cities have been aware of the emerald ash borer for some time, many Greater Minnesota cities are more recently learning about the pest and facing the challenges it brings their communities. Restrictions on moving wood have helped contain the ash borer's spread, but spread along transitways, mainly through human traffic still persists . . . The League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) is pushing for more state funding for communities struggling with the emerald ash borer . . . This past winter, when temperatures were warmer and there was no snow, conditions were ideal for the ash borer to survive and spread. The emerald ash borer is now being found in areas it wasn't before, like the Chippewa National Forest in northern Minnesota. In areas of the state, like some spots in northern Minnesota, places that previously remained safe from the pest, due to temperature, quarantine rules and other factors, black ash trees may now be more at risk. [Read more.](#)

Anderson: At DNR, Dave Trauba, a prairie guy, now oversees wildlife throughout Minnesota: Longtime Department of Natural Resources wildlife manager Dave Trauba was appointed Jan. 15 to lead the agency's Wildlife Section, overseeing species as diverse as mallards and mink, moose and mourning doves. Trauba had been appointed interim Wildlife Section manager in July 2024, replacing Kelly Straka, who was promoted to Fish and Wildlife Division director when Dave Olfelt retired. A passionate waterfowl hunter who is widely respected within the DNR and by those it serves, Trauba, 58, led habitat development projects at Lac qui Parle Wildlife Management Area in western Minnesota for more than two decades. As a DNR regional wildlife manager for the past nine years stationed in New Ulm, he oversaw management of ducks, pheasants, deer and other wildlife throughout much of the southern half of the state. Trauba will lead a Wildlife Section with an annual budget of \$35 million and a staff of about 260, some of whom have been at odds with DNR leadership in St. Paul in recent years, citing lack of support. Particularly troublesome has been timber cutting on state wildlife management areas, which wildlife managers have said benefited the timber industry at the expense of wildlife. The Legislative Auditor is reviewing the conflict and is expected to issue a report in coming months. [Read more.](#)

Select DNR News releases

- [3M PFAS settlement grant program RFP now open](#): \$20 million available for restoration and recreation projects.

Last Week at the Legislature:

No House committees met this week as the House DFL and GOP worked to resolve their power-sharing agreement. The House committees will begin meeting on Monday, February 10.

On Monday at 12:30 PM, Senate [Judiciary and Public Safety](#) met to hear a number of bills, including: [S.F. 0011 \(Rest\)](#): Exemption modification for firearm storage units. See also letter of support from [National Shooting Sports Foundation](#).

At 1:15 PM, Senate [Jobs and Economic Development](#) met to hear, among other things, an [overview](#) of Explore Minnesota (see: [Explore-Minnesota Annual Report](#) and [Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership](#)).

On Tuesday at 3:00 PM, Senate [Environment, Climate, and Legacy](#) heard the following bills: [S.F. 0770 \(Hawj\)](#): Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriation and certain land leveraging for federal grant funds authorization provision (see: [Outdoor Heritage Fund Recommendations Bill Summary Fiscal Year 2026](#), [Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Handout](#), and [OHF Coalition Support Letter](#)); [S.F. 0689 \(Wesenberg\)](#): Bear hunter preference points accumulation for youth authorization; [S.F. 0742 \(Wesenberg\)](#): Use of purple paint authorization in lieu of signage prohibiting trespassing; [S.F. 0574 \(Eichorn\)](#): Pokegama Bridge trail system safety improvements appropriation; and [S.F. 0811 \(Hauschild\)](#): Eating certain beavers prohibition repealer. The committee also heard from the MPCA regarding the 2025 report on PFAS and lead/cadmium laws

implementation, as required by the 2024 legislature (see: [MPCA Recommendations for Products Containing Lead Cadmium and PFAS](#) and [MPCA PFAS Report-Clean Water Action Handout](#)).

On Thursday at 3:00 PM, Senate [Environment, Climate, and Legacy](#) heard several Arts and Historical appropriation bills. They also heard from the Department of Natural Resources regarding the [MN DNR - Permitting Gas Resources Under a Temporary Regulatory Framework Report](#), and [S.F. 0540 \(Wesenberg\)](#) Impact of eagles on loons study requirement provision. See testimony on this bill by: [the Humane Society](#) and [Audubon](#).

Next Week at the Legislature:

On Monday at 8:15 AM, the House committee on [Fraud Prevention and State Agency Oversight Policy](#) will meet to hear from the Office of the Legislative Auditor: regarding its report on "[Oversight of State-Funded Grants to Nonprofit Organizations](#)."

On Monday at 1:00 PM, House [Agriculture Finance and Policy](#) will convene and hear informational hearings on opportunities and challenges facing Minnesota Agriculture, Sustainable Aviation Fuel, and First District Association Presentation on Milk Processing and wastewater challenges.

On Tuesday at 1:00 PM, House [Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy](#) will convene. They will hear member and staff introductions, and will hear from two agencies: the committee will hear a presentation by the DNR on the [GTAC Final Recommendations Report](#), and from the MPCA regarding [Recommendations for Products Containing Lead, Cadmium, and PFAS](#).

At 3:00 PM, Senate [Environment, Climate, and Legacy](#) will meet to hear several bills, including [SF976](#) (McEwen) Wilderness programs appropriation and [SF1039](#) (Hauschild) Parks and trails fund appropriation.

On Wednesday at 10:15 AM, House [Legacy Finance](#) will meet for member and staff introductions and hear a presentation by the Clean Water Council.

At 1:00 PM, House [Agriculture Finance and Policy](#) will meet for presentations by: Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI), DEED Office of Broadband Development, and the Center for Rural Policy and Development.

On Thursday at 1:00 PM, House [Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy](#) will hear a presentation on Minnesota Chamber Foundation Report, "Streamlining Minnesota's Environmental Permitting Process: Essential for Economic Growth" and discuss [HF8](#) (Heintzeman)- Efficiency of Wetland Conservation Act determinations improved, efficiency of environmental and resource management permit application process improved, Pollution Control Agency permit process modified, reports required, and money appropriated.

Bills Introductions of Interest:

Environment and Natural Resources:

Bipartisan Legislation:

Senators Johnson Stewart, Hauschild, Frentz, and Jasinski introduced--[S.F. No. 862](#): A bill for an act relating to capital investment; making changes to the water infrastructure funding program; making changes to the point source implementation grant program; establishing an emerging contaminants grant program; appropriating money for clean water; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 446A.072, subdivision 5a; 446A.073, subdivision 1; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 446A. Referred to the Committee on Capital Investment.

Senators Gustafson, Dornink, Kupec, Seeberger, and Weber introduced--[S.F. No. 882](#): A bill for an act relating to agriculture; appropriating money for the soil health financial assistance program. Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Veterans, Broadband, and Rural Development.

Senators Boldon, Drazkowski, Nelson, Dornink, and Miller introduced--[S.F. No. 909](#): A bill for an act relating to legacy; appropriating money from the clean water fund for a southeast regional groundwater protection and soil health initiative. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Kupec, Dahms, Putnam, and Westrom introduced--[S.F. No. 934](#): A bill for an act relating to agriculture; appropriating money to the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute. Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Veterans, Broadband, and Rural Development.

Senators Putnam, Weber, Kupec, and Westrom introduced--[S.F. No. 960](#): A bill for an act relating to taxation; property; establishing the agricultural riparian buffer property tax exemption; requiring reimbursement to taxing jurisdictions; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 272.02, by adding a subdivision; 273.1392; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 272. Referred to the Committee on Taxes.

Senators McEwen, Nelson, Hauschild, Rasmusson, and Hawj introduced--[S.F. No. 976](#): A bill for an act relating to arts and cultural heritage; appropriating money for wilderness programs. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

DFL Legislation:

Senator Cwodzinski introduced--[S.F. No. 875](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; modifying Boundary Water Canoe Area Wilderness mining restrictions; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 84.523. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Johnson Stewart introduced--[S.F. No. 925](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; appropriating money for aggregate resource inventory. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Xiong introduced--[S.F. No. 969](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; requiring disclosure of subsurface drain tile; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 103F. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Johnson Stewart introduced--[S.F. No. 1000](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; implementing recommendations of Aggregate Resources Task Force; requiring a report; appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 84.94, subdivision 4; 473.859, subdivision 2. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Hauschild and McEwen introduced--[S.F. No. 1072](#): A bill for an act relating to state lands; authorizing private sale of certain tax-forfeited land. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Maye Quade introduced--[S.F. No. 1117](#): A bill for an act relating to environment; requiring study of environmental impacts of artificial intelligence; requiring a report; appropriating money. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Republican Legislation:

Senators Howe and Anderson introduced--[S.F. No. 871](#): A bill for an act relating to environment; prohibiting unproductive conservation lands from being considered benefited property under state drainage laws; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 103E. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Farnsworth, Eichorn, Wesenberg, and Rarick introduced--[S.F. No. 876](#): A bill for an act relating to mining; improving coordination, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of environmental review and permitting process for metallic mineral mining projects; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 93. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Dahms and Weber introduced--[S.F. No. 946](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; appropriating money for floodplain management. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Green, Lucero, Drazkowski, Weber, and Wesenberg introduced--[S.F. No. 956](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; prohibiting conservation officers from conducting searches or seizures without a warrant or court order; requiring receipts to be provided to persons from whom property is seized; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 84.7741, subdivision 2; 84.89; 97A.221, subdivision 1; 97A.223, subdivision

1; 97A.225, subdivision 1; 97B.021, subdivision 2; 97C.355, subdivision 7; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 84. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Howe introduced--[S.F. No. 964](#): A bill for an act relating to environment; requiring a state agency to pay for the costs of investigating petroleum releases on land owned by the agency; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 115C.04, subdivisions 1, 3. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Howe introduced--[S.F. No. 968](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; prohibiting acquiring state land at auction; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 94. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Green, Draskowski, and Weber introduced--[S.F. No. 979](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; modifying provisions and requiring definition for calcareous fens; requiring rulemaking; requiring a report; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 103G.223. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Green and Weber introduced--[S.F. No. 980](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; requiring conservation officers to coordinate investigation and enforcement activity with sheriffs; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 84.028, subdivision 3, by adding a subdivision; 84.0835, subdivision 2; 84.0895, subdivision 6; 86B.801, by adding a subdivision; 97A.205; 97A.215, subdivision 1; 97A.221, subdivision 1; 97A.223, subdivision 1; 97A.225, subdivision 1; 97A.241, subdivision 1; 97B.002, subdivision 1; 97B.065, subdivision 2. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Howe introduced--[S.F. No. 992](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; modifying wetland replacement ratios; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 103G.222, subdivision 1; 103G.2242, subdivision 12; 103G.2243, subdivision 2. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Koran, Bahr, Mathews, and Howe introduced--[S.F. No. 997](#): A bill for an act relating to energy; requiring community solar garden subscribers to reside in the same county as the solar garden generating facility; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 216B.1641, subdivisions 1, 6. Referred to the Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate.

Heintzeman and Niska introduced: [H. F. 8](#). A bill for an act relating to environment; improving efficiency of Wetland Conservation Act determinations; modifying permitting efficiency reporting requirements; improving the efficiency of the environmental and resource management permit application process; requiring the Pollution Control Agency to issue separate permits for the construction and operation of certain facilities; modifying the expedited permitting process of the Pollution Control Agency; requiring petitioners for environmental assessment worksheets to reside in the affected or adjoining counties; eliminating scoping environmental assessment worksheet requirements for projects requiring an environmental impact statement; clarifying local review; requiring modification of the state implementation plan; requiring reports;

appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 15.99, subdivision 3; 116.03, subdivision 2b; 116.07, subdivisions 4a, 4d; 116D.04, subdivisions 2a, 2b; 116J.035, by adding a subdivision. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy.

Game and Fish:

Bipartisan Legislation:

Senators Rasmusson, Pha, Hauschild, Pratt, and Hoffman introduced--[S.F. No. 935](#): A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for capital improvement at public water access and boating facilities on public waters and at state fish hatcheries; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds. Referred to the Committee on Capital Investment.

Republican Legislation:

Senators Howe and Dornink introduced--[S.F. No. 889](#): A bill for an act relating to game and fish; modifying age-related exemptions for certain licenses; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 97A.451, subdivisions 2, 3; 97A.475, subdivisions 2, 3, 6, 7, 20; 97B.022, subdivision 2; 97B.601, subdivision 4; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 97A.451, subdivisions 2a, 3b, 5, 6. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senator Howe introduced--[S.F. No. 965](#): A bill for an act relating to game and fish; modifying deer firearms season dates; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 97B.311. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

DFL Legislation:

Senator Kunesh introduced--[S.F. No. 943](#): A bill for an act relating to game and fish; prohibiting open season for taking wolves; increasing criminal penalties; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 84.027, subdivision 20; 97A.075, subdivision 7; 97A.451, subdivision 3; 97A.473, subdivisions 3, 5, 5a; 97A.475, subdivisions 2, 3, 20; 97A.485, subdivision 6; 97B.031, subdivisions 1, 2; 97B.035, subdivision 1a; 97B.075; 97B.601, subdivisions 3a, 4; 97B.603; 97B.605; 97B.645, subdivision 9; 97B.648; 97B.901; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 97B.647. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Outdoor Recreation:

Bipartisan Legislation:

Senators Johnson, Hauschild, Eichorn, and Frentz introduced--[S.F. No. 958](#): A bill for an act relating to natural

resources; modifying definition of all-terrain vehicle; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 84.92, subdivision 8. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Hauschild, Eichorn, Johnson Stewart, McEwen, and Hoffman introduced--[S.F. No. 1039](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; appropriating money from the parks and trails fund. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Hauschild, Eichorn, Johnson Stewart, McEwen, and Hoffman introduced--[S.F. No. 1040](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; appropriating money for Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Hauschild, Miller, Hawj, Eichorn, and Rarick introduced--[S.F. No. 1050](#): A bill for an act relating to natural resources; creating Outdoor School for All grant program; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 84. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Senators Klein and Duckworth introduced--[S.F. No. 1081](#): A bill for an act relating to legacy; appropriating money for Heroes and Heritage Interpretive Trail Loop. Referred to the Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy.

Firearms:

Republican Legislation:

Senator Draheim introduced--[S.F. No. 1088](#): A bill for an act relating to firearms; clarifying law on use of force in defense of home and person; codifying and extending Minnesota's self-defense and defense of home laws; eliminating the common law duty to retreat in cases of self-defense outside the home; expanding the boundaries of dwelling for purposes of self-defense; creating a presumption in the case of a person entering a dwelling or occupied vehicle by stealth or force; extending the rights available to a person in that person's dwelling to a person defending against entry of that person's occupied vehicle; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 609.065. Referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.

*Bonus

The Loon's surprisingly difficult path to becoming Minnesota's state bird: The Legislature named the common loon as Minnesota's state bird in 1961 in large part because it's so distinctive, with its white-spangled black plumage, long black bill and those Morocco red eyes. It's a wilderness bird that lives on the water and emits a haunting wail. And we're unique among the states in choosing the loon. Thirty states share state birds, the most popular being the northern cardinal (the choice of seven states). While picking the loon may seem like an obvious choice today, it almost didn't happen. It took lawmakers, ornithologists, women's clubs and schoolchildren more than 30 years to sort through dozens of candidates. Before state leaders finally settled on the great northern diver — as the common loon is also known — earlier bills

championed several different birds, including the goldfinch, wood duck, pileated woodpecker and mourning dove . . . With an estimated 12,000 to 13,000 adult loons, Minnesota has the largest common loon population among the Lower 48 states. [Read more](#).