

2023 Legislative Session Preview

The 2023 legislative session began Tuesday with largely ceremonial floor sessions in the Senate and House. This session is the first half of the legislative biennium and is a budget setting year for the Legislature. Below is a general preview of the 2023 session, including information on committees, city advocacy, legislative contacts, Metro Cities' legislative priorities and other information.

Many New Faces at Capitol

Following a host of legislative retirements, the Minnesota Legislature will contain an unprecedented number of new members for the 2023-2024 biennium. The House has 47 newly elected members and 3 former DFL members returning to the legislature, with thirty five percent of 2023-2024 House members not having served in the last biennium. The Senate has 24 newly elected members which means 36 percent of Senate members are serving their first term. Click [HERE](#) to view the 2022 Election Directory to learn more about the makeup of each body.

House and Senate Leadership

The House has 70 DFL and 64 GOP members. Rep. Melissa Hortman (Brooklyn Park) continues as Speaker of the House and Rep. Jamie Long (Minneapolis) will serve as House Majority Leader. Rep. Lisa Demuth (Cold Spring) was named House Minority Leader.

The Senate has 34 DFL and 33 GOP members. Sen. Kari Dziedzic (Minneapolis) will serve as Senate Majority Leader and Sen. Bobby Joe Champion (Minneapolis) will serve as Senate President. Sen. Mark Johnson (East Grand Forks) was named Senate Minority Leader.

State Budget

The November Budget Forecast projected a \$17.6 billion surplus for the state; the next budget forecast will be released in late February and will serve as the definitive forecast in guiding lawmakers in setting a budget for the next biennium.

Lawmakers Announce Session Priorities

Governor Tim Walz stated that his priorities include funding education, paid family and medical leave, and rebate checks. The Governor will release his two-year budget recommendations on January 24th.

It is anticipated that the House DFL will work to codify abortion rights into law, pass federal tax conformity, and legalize adult use marijuana. Senate Majority Leader Dziedzic listed reproductive rights and mental health services for students as top priorities. Additionally, Senate Democrats have indicated that providing a local match for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will be a priority.

House Republicans will focus on tax relief, public safety, and education. House Minority Leader Demuth stated that police officer retention, carjacking, and fentanyl possession are major areas of concern. Senate Republicans have made tax cuts a priority, pointing to the \$17.6 billion budget surplus and the impact of inflation on Minnesotans. Other priorities include improving public safety, education, and workforce issues in rural Minnesota.

Click [HERE](#) for the article “We asked the governor and top lawmakers about their priorities”, which contains additional information on top priorities for the Governor and Legislative leaders.

House and Senate Committees

Click [HERE](#) for a list of House committees for the 2023 session with information on committee chairs, rosters, and schedules. Click [HERE](#) for a list of Senate committees and [HERE](#) for information on Senate committee chairs, rosters, and schedules.

Metro Cities’ Legislative Priorities

Click [HERE](#) to view Metro Cities’ 2023 Legislative Priorities as adopted by the Board of Directors in December. Priorities encompass several key issues of importance to metropolitan cities in the areas of aids, taxes, bonding, housing, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, public safety, local control, race equity, and others. Staff contacts and issue areas are included later in this article.

Metro Cities Newsletter and Bills of Note

Each week, Metro Cities publishes an online newsletter for its members, with timely information and updates on legislative bills, hearings, debates, and activity of interest to metropolitan cities. During the session, the newsletter contains a “Bills of Note” with information on recently introduced bills of interest to metropolitan cities.

Action Alerts

During the session, Metro Cities may ask city officials to reach out to their legislators on a specific bill or issue. These are usually time sensitive requests for action. Many legislators value hearing directly from city officials on what they think on a particular bill or topic. Thank you in advance – your responses are important and greatly appreciated.

City Advocacy at the Capitol

City officials are encouraged to get to know your local legislators and to stay in touch with them as bills affecting cities are considered, and on individual city bills and issues. Please click [HERE](#) for a guide on advocating at the Capitol and click [HERE](#) for a helpful resource on which legislators represent your city.

Sharing your city’s unique perspective on how legislation or a budget item would impact local residents, businesses, property taxpayers, and others can help shape legislation. Metro Cities also makes resources and background information available to cities. If you have questions about how to contact your legislator, please reach out directly to Metro Cities staff.

Contact Information for Metro Cities Staff

Staff contacts and issue areas are listed below:

- Patricia Nauman, Executive Director: patricia@metrocitiesmn.org (taxes, aids, inflow-infiltration bonding, regional issues, duty disability)
- Mike Lund, Government Relations Specialist: michael@metrocitiesmn.org (transportation, local control, elections, public safety, environment)
- Ania McDonnell, Government Relations Specialist: ania@metrocitiesmn.org (state and regional housing policy and funding, economic development, redevelopment, community development, local control)
- Jennifer Dorn, Office Manager: jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org

Metro Cities News is emailed periodically to Metro Cities member mayors, councilmembers, city managers/administrators, and city staff to keep officials and staff abreast of important metro city issues.

If you'd like to sign up to receive Metro Cities News, please email newsletter@metrocitiesmn.org and provide the following: Name, Title, Employer and Email address. Thank you!

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