

News & Events

Minnesota Government Update

September 28, 2010

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Plans for Special Session Advance

Governor Tim Pawlenty and legislative leaders presented a united front on September 27 in announcing their support for a half-day special session in early October to deal with the devastating flood in southern Minnesota. Leaders sat down with the Governor in a planning session and held a press conference to announce their unified commitment to helping cities and counties rebuild.

The special session will likely occur between October 7 and October 12. The Governor and Legislature will use an existing template put into law in 2007 to deal with flooding issues. The Governor said there will be a cushion of about \$235 million on the bottom line at the end of the current biennium on June 30, 2011. This amount is expected to be enough to cover the State's portion of flooding repair costs. Pawlenty noted use of the State's cash flow account will be necessary to make payments until the cushion is available at the end of the biennium.

FEMA representatives will be in Minnesota making assessments this week or next. As the data comes in, the Legislature will simultaneously plan for the predicted special session. Once Minnesota qualifies for FEMA funding, leaders will make decisions on how to move forward. When questioned about past abuse of flood relief money, Governor Pawlenty and Speaker Kelliher noted the Legislature has learned from past mistakes and they will write safeguards and specific requirements into the law.

Governor Pawlenty stated he would ask President Obama to declare the 34 county Southern Minnesota region a federal disaster area by the end of this week or early next week.

A Flood of Polls

There has been a flood of polls recently on the Minnesota gubernatorial race. Three respected polls show the race a dead heat. The *Star Tribune* poll, however, shows DFLer Mark Dayton with a nine-point lead over Republican Tom Emmer. The *Star Tribune* is taking some heat from Republican Party leadership for their polling methods which, they allege, "oversamples Democrats and undersamples Republicans."

The election on November 2, 2010, is five weeks away. The rhetoric, advertising and get-out-the-vote efforts will intensify especially for those undecided voters. In other polling notes, the surveys indicate Independence Party candidate Tom Horner is pulling more support from Democrats than Republicans. Forty percent of likely voters say an endorsement by Governor Pawlenty would weaken their support for Emmer with 25 percent saying it would increase their support and 44 percent said an endorsement by President Obama would weaken their support for Dayton with 30 percent saying it would increase their support.

Rasmussen Reports poll results:

500 likely Minnesota voters polled on September 22, 2010
Republican Tom Emmer - 42 percent (up 6 points from August)
Democrat Mark Dayton - 41 percent (down 4 points from August)
Independent Tom Horner - 9 percent (down 1 point from August)
Other Candidates - 6 percent
Not sure - 2 percent

MPR/Humphrey Institute poll reports:

Republican Tom Emmer - 34 percent
Democrat Mark Dayton - 34 percent
Independent Tom Horner - 13 percent
Other/don't know/ refused - 19 percent

Survey USA/KSTP poll numbers:

1,000 Minnesota adults September 12 - 14, 2010
Republican Tom Emmer - 36 percent
Democrat Mark Dayton - 38 percent
Independent Tom Horner - 18 percent
Other/don't know/refused - 8 percent

Star Tribune/Minnesota Poll:

949 likely voters polled September 20 - 23, 2010
Republican Tom Emmer - 30 percent
Democrat Mark Dayton 39 percent
Independent Tom Horner 18 percent

State May Retain its Eight Congressional Seats

A report released this week by Election Data Services indicates Minnesota may retain all eight of its Congressional seats for the next decade. The report projects Minnesota will retain its Eighth Congressional District seat by 15,643 people. The same group had issued a report last year that showed Minnesota losing a seat after the 2010 census. The final census data will not be tallied until December.

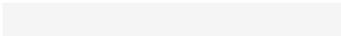
For up-to-date information about the Minnesota Legislature, tune into Almanac: At the Capitol. This lively and informative program is aired Wednesdays during the legislative session on Twin Cities Public Television at 7:00 PM on Channel 17 and at 10:00 PM on Channel 2.

Almanac: At the Capitol is seen on all public television stations throughout Minnesota and in Fargo. Winthrop & Weinstine is the exclusive law-firm partner and a sponsor of the program.

For more information and to see previous broadcasts, check out the Almanac: At the Capitol website at <http://tpt.org/aatc/>.

Professionals

Practice Areas

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