

MSBA Capitol Connection

March 12, 2010



Deadline Day

Today is the "first deadline" at the Capitol, the day by which bills must be passed by all policy committees in either the House or Senate in order to remain alive. Every bill on the MSBA's legislative agenda for this year has met the first deadline. The "second deadline," which occurs a week from today, is the deadline for House and Senate policy committees to act favorably on bills that met the first deadline in the other body. Bills that do not meet these deadlines are dead. The looming first deadline produced a frenzied week at the Capitol as committees worked through stacks of bills. Next week's Capitol Connection will contain a list of bills relevant to the legal profession that manage to clear the first and second deadlines.

Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill Advances

On Wednesday morning the House Civil Justice Committee passed [HF890](#), a proposal from the Family Law Section that modifies Minnesota's Uniform Parentage Act to bring the law in line with widely-used medical reproductive techniques and give additional legal parental presumption to non-genetically related intended parents. Attorney Steven Snyder testified in support of the bill, which is carried by lawyer-legislator Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park). The bill now moves to the House floor. The companion bill, [SF436](#), awaits a vote on the Senate floor.

Judicial Selection Reform Bill Assigned to House and Senate Committees

The MSBA is strongly advocating for [HF224/SF70](#), legislation that would reform the way state court judges are selected and retained. On Wednesday the Senate Rules and Administration Committee sent SF70, authored by Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope), to the Finance Committee. It will first be heard in the Judiciary Budget Division, chaired by lawyer-legislator Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids). HF224, carried by lawyer-legislator Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-St. Louis Park), has advanced to the House Civil Justice Committee, chaired by lawyer-legislator Rep. Joe

Mullery (DFL-Minneapolis). The bill was endorsed in a *Star Tribune* [editorial](#) as well as in a [commentary](#) written by think tank presidents from opposite ends of the political spectrum. In addition, MSBA president Leo Brisbois penned [an article](#) explaining the merits of the legislation.

Justice System Funding

Gov. Pawlenty has proposed a 3% reduction in the court budget, with a 6% cut for civil legal services and some public defense grants. This week the Senate Finance Committee approved a budget bill that includes cuts of around 3.5% to the courts, public defense, and civil legal services. Yesterday the House Public Safety Finance Division unveiled its proposal, which calls for cuts of around 1.5%. The House Finance Committee is scheduled to hear the proposal today. To learn more about the MSBA's efforts to support adequate funding for the justice system, visit 1000Supporters.org and take a moment to [sign up as a supporter](#).

Filing Deadlines for Candidates (Including Judges) Moved Up

SF2551 was signed by Gov. Pawlenty last week. This law provides new timelines for candidates planning to run in state and county general elections. The 2010 filing period for affidavits of candidacy opens May 18 and closes June 1. June 3 is the withdrawal deadline. The new law also changes the state's 2010 primary election date to August 10.



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