

# Minnesota Health Baby Act

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# Agenda

1. The Minnesota Legislature
2. Minnesota Healthy Baby Act
3. Lobbying Your Legislators

# Part I - The Minnesota Legislature

- The Minnesota legislature is bicameral – meaning we have two houses that make up the state legislature
- 2014 election ushered in a mixed government
- The Minnesota House of Representatives has 134 members that serve two year terms
  - 72 GOP, 62 DFL
- The Minnesota Senate has 67 members that serve four year terms
  - 39 DFL, 28 GOP
- Governor Dayton (DFL) was reelected in 2014

# Legislative Session

- Laws are passed or changed during the legislative session
  - Budget year = January to May.
  - Bonding year = Session is shorter & start dates are determined by leadership.
  - 2016 = Bonding year
    - Session will run 10 weeks, March 8th to May 16th.
- In Minnesota, session spans two years, which is called a biennium.
  - For example, 2015 and 2016 are considered one biennium, and are referred to as the 89<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session.
- During the biennium roughly 6,000 to 8,000 bills are introduced
  - All bills expire at the end of the biennium in which they were introduced

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 1) Idea:

- A bill is an idea for a new law or an idea to change an old law.
- Anyone can suggest an idea for a bill—an individual, consumer group, professional association, government agency, or the governor.
- The idea must have a House and Senate member willing to be its sponsor and move it through the legislative process

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 2) Idea put into legal form:

- The Office of the Revisor of Statutes puts the idea for a new law into proper legal form, and complies with the rules of both bodies.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 3) Bill authors

- Each bill must have a legislator to sponsor and introduce it in the Legislature. That legislator is the chief author whose name appears on the bill along with the bill's file number to identify it as it moves through the legislative process.
- There may be up to 34 coauthors from the House and 4 from the Senate. Their names also appear on the bill.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 4) Bill introduction:

- The chief House author of the bill introduces it in the House; the chief Senate author introduces it in the Senate.
- The bill introduction is called the first reading.
- The presiding officer of the House then refers it to an appropriate House committee for discussion; the same thing happens in the Senate.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

5) Bill is heard in committee:

- The bill is discussed in one or more committees depending upon the subject matter. After discussion, committee members recommend action—approval or disapproval—to the full House and full Senate.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 6) Bill heard on the House and Senate floor:

- In the House, the General Register serves as a parking lot where bills await action by the full body. Bills chosen to appear on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar are drawn from the General Register.
- In the Senate, a different procedure is used. Bills are listed on the General Orders agenda. Senate members, acting as the "committee of the whole," have a chance to debate the issue and offer amendments on the bill. Afterwards, they vote to recommend: passage of the bill, progress (delay action), or further committee action. And sometimes they recommend that a bill not pass. From here, the bill is placed on the Calendar.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 7) Conference committee:

- If the House and Senate versions of the bill are different, they go to a conference committee.
- Three or five representatives from each body are appointed.
- The committee meets to work out differences in the two bills and to reach a compromise.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 8) Back to the House and Senate floor

- The conference committee's compromise bill then goes back to the House and the Senate for another vote.
- If both bodies pass the bill in this form, it is sent to the governor for his or her approval or disapproval.
- If one or both bodies reject the report, it goes back to the conference committee for further consideration.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

## 9) Governor:

- Once the governor has the bill, he or she may:
  - Sign it = bill becomes law
  - Veto it within three days
  - Or, allow it to become law by not signing it.
- During session, the House and Senate can override a governor's veto. This requires a two-thirds vote in the House (90 votes) and Senate (45 votes).
- The governor also may "line-item veto" parts of a money bill, or "pocket veto" a bill passed during the last three days of the session by not signing it within 14 days after final adjournment.

# Part II – The Minnesota Healthy Baby Act

# Senate File 2154/ House File 2322

- Creates a Minnesota licensure designation for qualified lactation consultants certified by the International Board of Lactation Consultants Examiners
- Requires licensure for those providing clinical lactation services
  - Not required for those providing breastfeeding education and support
- Houses a licensing credential list within the Minnesota Department of Health
  - Two-year licensing period
- Exempt are those who are: currently licensed health care professionals, employed by the federal, state or local government agencies (including WIC Staff), provide volunteer or peer-to-peer breastfeeding support.

# Senate File 2154/ House File 2322

- We have five authors in the Senate and ten authors in the House
- Our authors run the gamut of the political spectrum
  - We chose members who not only sit on the committees we need to pass through, but who also have good connections with leadership, or the committee chair and who span the political spectrum. Additionally our authors represent rural and urban Minnesotans.



**Senator Chris Eaton (DFL – Brooklyn Center):  
Bill Author of Senator File 2154**

Senator Eaton is a Majority Whip for the DFL caucus, a member of the Health, Human Services and Housing committee, and the Vice Chair of the State and Local Government committee



**Representative Roz Peterson (GOP – Lakeville):  
Author of House File 2322**

Representative Peterson is the Vice Chair of the Health and Human Services Reform committee.

# Co-Authors

## Senate

Senator Michelle Benson  
(GOP – Ham Lake)  
Senator John Hoffman  
(DFL – Champlin)  
Senator Jeff Hayden  
(DFL – Minneapolis)  
Senator Carla Nelson  
(GOP – Rochester)

## House

Representative Jennifer Schultz  
(DFL – Duluth)  
Representative Mary Franson  
(GOP – Alexandria)  
Representative Susan Allen  
(DFL – Minneapolis)  
Representative Nick Zerwas  
(GOP – Elk River)  
Representative Peter Fischer  
(DFL – Maplewood)  
Representative Rena Moran  
(DFL – St Paul)  
Representative Diane Laine  
(DFL – Columbia Heights)  
Representative Jason Issacson  
(DFL – Little Canada)  
Representative Carly Melin  
(DFL – Hibbing )

# Committee List

## Senate:

- Health, Human Services and Housing
- Health and Human Services Budget Division
  - Last session also requested to be heard in State and Local Government, and the Judiciary committee

## House of Representatives:

- Health and Human Services Reform
- Health and Human Services Finance
  - Possibly Government Operations and Elections Policy, and Civil Law and Data Practices

# 2015 Session and M.H.B.A.

- The Jacobson Law Group was hired by the Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition in December of 2014
- While the MBC was putting together draft bill language, we found our bill authors
- Got the bill drafted
- Found coauthors
- We met with various stakeholder groups and committee members
- MDH and the Nurses Association decided to weigh in and asked for language changes (aka amendments)
- Some of the amendments, from MDH in particular were significant therefore we redrafted and dropped a second bill

# Interim and the 2016 Session

Our goals for the upcoming months:

- Conducting meetings with committee chairs and bill authors
- Establishing a solid grassroots base
  - Where you can help
- Securing an informational hearing and/or a commitment from each chair that they will give us a hearing in 2016
- Making any necessary changes to our messaging and literature

# Part III – Lobbying 101

# What is a Lobbyist?

- A lobbyist is an activist who seeks to persuade members of the government to enact legislation that would benefit their group.
- While most people think of lobbyists only as paid professionals, there are also many volunteer lobbyists.
- Anyone who petitions the government or contacts their member of Congress to voice an opinion is functioning as a lobbyist.

# Lobbying Your Legislator

- Legislators want to hear from their constituents
- Constituent contact can be a letter, a phone call or email to your member's office, or a meeting
- Talking points and Fact Sheets are in your folders and available online at the MBC website under Advocacy
- If you are interested in helping, please let Stephanie Rodriguez-Moser know at [mnbreastfeedingcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:mnbreastfeedingcoalition@gmail.com) and we will add you to our grassroots list