

John Palmer <palmertss@cloudnet.com>

Please remind our members that they should report the results of their contact with their senators. SF255 is headed to the Finance committee.

The attachment is the delete all amendment for SF 255. (See news for copy) The legislative committee needs to review this version and refine our talking points. Notice the current version requires that an instructor monitor student progress and be available for questions. Clarification of how provisions of MCAR 7411 can be complied with. The MCAR 7411.36 that is repealed simple eliminates duplication regarding online instruction (18 and over v. Under 18).

I sure hope that \$150 fee is not charged to every approved program to fund the new position. If that is the case not only will the quality of novice driver education be drawn down by instructor less programmed instruction but the good programs will pay for the establishment of the instructor less prograded instruction. Since the various amendments are not yet available for review we really do not know what they actually did. SF 255 is not ready for prime time and our association needs its members to contact their senators and let the senators know how strongly they oppose instructor less programmed instruction.

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On Feb 23, 2021, at 4:57 PM, Joe Christensen <[mdtsea@cloudnet.com](mailto:mdtsea@cloudnet.com)> wrote:

The Transportation Finance and Policy Committee held a hearing on SF255 today. MDTSEA was not informed that the bill would be discussed nor were we invited to testify. Someone informed me at 2:00 and I sent information to members. Several of us were able to listen in. It was on Facebook and not Zoom, so we could listen but not request a chance to talk.

This bill is sponsored by AAA MN/IA and would allow them to teach classroom driver education totally on line **without any teacher involvement**. Search for "MN SF255" to read it. DPS seemed to agree but I think it was because DPS would get another full time position to monitor it. Dustin monitors all of our programs on one full time position.

A amendment was substituted for the original bill but I have not seen the new language.

I sent a message to Chair Newman stating my concerns and that if the committee wanted to improve driver education they should have Minnesota adopt the National Driver Education Standards. This concept violates the standards in several ways.

Please contact your senator and the committee chair and members.

Chair Scott J. Newman, 18, R 3105 Minnesota Senate Bldg. St. Paul, MN 55155 651-296-4131  
[sen.scott.newman@senate.mn](mailto:sen.scott.newman@senate.mn)

[https://www.senate.mn/committees/committee\\_bio.html?cmte\\_id=3102&ls=92](https://www.senate.mn/committees/committee_bio.html?cmte_id=3102&ls=92)

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Murray Smart <murrayrsmart@gmail.com>

I have been contacted by Education Minnesota regarding these bills. They also have concerns about the bills.

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Denise Lillis <tdlillis@hotmail.com>

If this bill should pass, is there anything that says that as a District, we can say that we will only provide BTW to students that have taken our classroom. Or at least provide a list of what we deem, approved programs. I was going to ask this tomorrow but wasn't sure if Dustin would be in the zoom meeting. It sounded like he was for the bill.

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Gregory Davis <davis.greg@isd391.org>

It is interesting to note that KTOE radio station, which broadcasts from Mankato but is also carried by an Owatonna station near where Sen. Jasinski resides, tried to schedule him last week along with my interview. The station said he couldn't work it out. Maybe he was too busy with his online pilot training program. Once again everyone has to make decisions, including students, what's most important.

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Ray Kroll <rckroll@comcast.net>

Kudos to Joe Christensen for his timely alert to today's Senate Committee hearing on SF 255 ON LINE DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAM.

The courage of John Palmer MDTSEA Registered Lobbyist to express disdain for the absence of a willingness by our elected senators to reach out for professional driver educator's concerns deserves our recognition. I have read where some feel that he is too far removed from active driver education matters. Those critics are wrong. Dr. John Palmer has brought forth extensive research to present national standards that are in place for the delivery of classroom and behind the wheel driver education. He also provided information about the programmed learning research of B.F. Skinner, who in the 1950s used animals to prove his findings. Well, we are not starching animals, we are teaching real live young women and men who have the grave responsibility of learning how to safely operate vehicles in a dynamic and many times unsafe conditions. We must constantly work to update ourselves to be the best we can be for the benefit of our students. An on-line driver education program with 1000 slides, over 30 hours, will never replace the attitude development that professional driver education instructors will bring to their students. As MDTSEA members, we must seize the opportunity to advance ourselves. Our schedules must be cleared to participate in the MDTSEA Conference Wed., Feb 24, 2021 at 7:00pm with Dr. Fred Mottola. This will be my fifth exposure to his caring and brilliant strategies for shaping our future drivers. How in the world would an on-line presentation of 1000 slides interact with the professional credentials of Dr. Mottola.

What follows is my take on what happened today as Senators Newman and Jasinski removed SF 255 from the table for discussion.

Senator Jasinski called for details from representatives of the DPS Mn Dept. of Public Safety. Amendment A8 was approved. Note: With no explanation of its content. Senator Jasinski said on-line driver education is an option for parents and students who must contend with schedule concerns. Note: I have always told parents that their students have to make decisions. Senator Jasinski even noted that he is taking on-line pilot instruction. Note: Not sure of the merit of that correlation.

Christine Zimmer was recognized to give testimony, as consulting representative of AAA Minnesota and Iowa to answer questions.

Emma Corrie Director of DVS Driver Vehicle Services MNDPS testified to Senator Jasinski and the committee. She had no issues with several amendments to the bill. She did question the absence appropriate funding to review and monitor driver evaluations.

Senator Jasinski called upon Senate staffer Ms. Boyd for the fiscal note. Ms. Boyd reported:

1. One (1) FTE Full Time Equivalent full time state administrator. Salary \$98,000. In 2022 and \$91,000. each year thereafter.
2. Driver Education license fee of \$150.00 per year to fund the FTE. Note: Not sure what this means.
3. 20 new on-line driver education programs are projected.

Ms. Corrie - Hire one additional FTE. We already have Dustin Lacina supervising the driver education programs in Minnesota.

Ms. Zimmer said there is no frame of reference for 20 programs.

Senator Jasinski observed that traditional driver education proponents that safety is lost without in person teacher student contact.

Ms. Corrie stated that safety is paramount when preparing young drivers. There is a need for checks and balance as well as the need for attendance and accomplishment measurements.

Mike Hanson Director of the Office of Traffic Safety for MNDPS . In addition to his role as Director, Hanson also: serves as the Governor's Representative to NHTSA National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. He stated that he is not aware of any studies that on-line driver education is any less safe. Guard rails would be incorporated to preserve regulations.

Senator Mc Ewen noted the provision 3.16 places restrictions on the DPS Commissioner to make changes. Who provides BTW?

Ms. Corrie - Staff member would work with on-line school to make sure we are working with DPS to review programs.

Ms. Zimmer - providers can do both components and that is how it would be set up at this point.

Senator Jasinski - On-line is an option, an alternative to convenience.

Motion to approve SF 255 with amendments and send to the Finance Committee. Motion approved.

I also note with appreciation the work of MDTSEA Region 1 Director and Legislative Committee Member for his radio station interview last Friday where he capably represented MDTSEA's opposition to On-Line driver education programs.

Respectfully submitted

Raymond F. Kroll  
MDTSEA Legislative Chair

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