



A Word from the Chair

MN Legislative Wrap-Up

by Clayton Schenck
Chair, Board of Directors

I'd like to share with all members of the Electrical Association the following information we received from Bill

Strusinski, our Government Affairs Representative, as the legislative session recently ended...

Well, it was a wild and crazy end to the 2020 session of the legislature. Disagreement was the order of the day and much good policy was left for future legislatures to resolve. It is hard to believe that just 8 weeks ago everything was going smoothly, and we were amicably headed to the finish line. We had a \$1.5 Billion budget surplus and there was an appetite for passing several good bills for members of the Electrical Association and all citizens of Minnesota. Unfortunately, the coronavirus brought chaos and uncertainty to the legislative process. The virus not only killed people it also killed hope for the development of good public policy. Precious time was lost and new approaches to legislating had to be developed in short order.

All activity at the Capitol stopped and all legislators and staff went home. After a few weeks' hiatus, the legislature returned in late April to continue the work of the people. Initially, most legislative activity was COVID-19 related. All parties seem to agree to the emergency declarations and readily accepted solutions put forward by the health experts.

As session drew closer to a close, the budget went into a financial tailspin and the partisan political fights ruled the day once more. As a result, the session ended without final resolution on a bonding bill and several other key bills. The bonding bill was ultimately

held hostage by the republicans and offered to the Governor in exchange for legislation that would curtail his ability to declare a health emergency and unilaterally spend \$2B in federal CARES money that enhanced our state government coffers. The Governor did not give, nor did the republicans. The political divide grew wider and the "let's all get along" momentum ceased. But fear not, new opportunities are headed our way. The latest rumors predict the legislature will be called into special session around June 12 when the current emergency declaration will expire. Should the Governor issue a new order, the legislature is required to meet in session to determine if they want to rescind that order or allow it to continue.

What do we expect going forward? The true magnitude of the deficit is yet to be determined. By early June, based on the state of fiscal affairs at that time, decisions will be made on budget cuts and spending for a bonding bill. Fortunately, our significant \$2B plus budget reserve should make budget cuts less painful. In the end, I also believe the legislature will pass a robust (\$1.5 to \$2B) bonding bill. It will stimulate the construction industry and create jobs. Those capital investment projects will help lead the economic recovery in Minnesota.

Most legislation that passed at end of this session related to the pandemic. Some policy bills were passed but not many. One bill that did pass included a provision that would appropriate \$10M to a **solar incentive program** administered by Xcel Energy. Another bill sup-

(Chair - cont. on pg 2)

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From the Executive Director

Refreshed Look with More Value than Ever

by Clara Albert, CAE
Executive Director

The time has come for us to reveal the new logo and brand! Thank you to all involved in the process. This initiative began over a year ago during our strategic planning session where the need for a refresh was determined. We began working with Mercury Creative Group and a taskforce of members and staff to define our brand and what our look and feel would be. All of these workshops and discussions brought us to this point.

The new logo was inspired by a closed circuit and is representative of safety and connectivity. The mark is off kilter indicating a state of motion and a drive for excellence. The metallic copper represents copper wire, the solid blue honors our previous identity and the optimistic green is a nod to sustainability. Pointed out by our Membership Chair, Jay Lewis, the new logo forms a Delta inside the three pillars. As you know, a delta connection is a connection used in a three-phase electrical system in which three elements in series form a triangle, the supply being input and output at the three junctions. The delta connection consists of three-phase windings connected end-to-end, which are 120° apart from each other electrically.

The new look sparked a discussion on an entire website revamp. While we had to go in and change the colors, logos and look – we might as well work on

the navigation and intuitiveness of the site to ensure you all can find what you need. The new site is clean and easy to use. Please take a look around and let us know if you have any questions or suggestions. Same URL: www.electricalassociation.com

Also, new offering alert! We have apparel available on our site for you to purchase with the new logo. You can find this under the ‘Store’ tab on the home page. You can order something for yourself, your spouse or anyone on your crew. You can even get it customized with your logo on it as well.

We have ordered new bumper stickers and membership brochures. All members will be receiving a letter soon with some of these pieces. Let us know if you want more of either to help us with recruitment strategies as we continue to grow our membership as we provide more and more value to the industry.

All of this being said, the work has just begun...a brand’s work is never done. But now that we have flipped the switch, it’s time to continue the momentum and continue the work. We will focus on our essential value, value proposition, primary audience and brand tone that were all defined as we continue to build on our programs and services for YOU.

(Chair - cont. from pg 1)

ported efficient lighting **CIP programs** by specifically encouraging the use of LED lighting.

Several bills failed to achieve the consensus necessary for passage at this time. Such bills include tax reform, employer immunity from liability from COVID lawsuits, the Energy Conservation and Optimization Act, the prohibition of the California emissions standards bill, a bill to eliminate regulations that increase the cost of housing, more money for rental and mortgage assistance, bills that set the conditions for reopening businesses, and a bill that ratifies the collective bargaining agreements negotiated for state employees. But like all legislation, failed to pass, only reflects that particular moment in time. In the fight

for good policy development there is always tomorrow! Thus, these bills are candidates to be considered in the special session. Since the House is controlled by the Democrats and the Senate is controlled by the Republicans, securing bipartisan agreement in a divided government environment will continue to be the problem.

Finally, all legislators will soon be hitting the campaign trail. They will be challenged to develop new strategies to get their message out. There will not be campaign rallies or parades and the public will be practicing social distancing. But run for office they will, and the election will occur on November 3 regardless. Remember to reward your political friends with your support. Stay well!

You Need to Know

State and Federal Income Tax... Taxpayers have until 7/15/20 to file their 2019 state and federal individual tax returns. (MN Dept of Revenue)

Prevailing Wage... You can submit your information electronically or by hardcopy before 6/5. Visit <https://secure.doli.state.mn.us/pwratesurvey> and use the PIN number and key provided in the letter that was mailed to you in order to login or to download a paper survey form. More info: dli.prevwage@state.mn.us (MN DLI)

US Unemployment... Nonfarm payroll employment falls 20.5 million in April; unemployment rate rises to 14.7%. Employment fell sharply in all major industry sectors, with heavy job losses in leisure and hospitality. (US BLS)

Lyon County 0.5% Sales & Use Tax Ends 6/30/20... Starting July 1, Lyon County Transit Sales & Use Tax will no longer apply to sales made within the county. The state sales & use tax remains at 6.875% for sales in Lyon County, plus any other local sales taxes that apply. The tax began 10/1/2015, and was used to pay the costs in the

2015–2024 10-year Highway Construction Plan. salesuse.tax@state.mn.us. (MN Dept of Revenue)

COVID RELIEF

Legislation expands workers' compensation coverage during COVID-19 pandemic... Gov. Walz has signed a law that provides occupational protections for certain workers who contract COVID-19. Effective April 8, the law states that certain employees who contract COVID-19 are presumed to have an occupational disease covered by the MN workers' comp law. A summary of the law and answers to frequently asked questions are available at www.dli.mn.gov/updates (MN DLI)

Federated announced their COVID-19 Client Relief Credit... Federated will provide an automatic premium reduction of 15% credit based on Business Auto premium, Auto Dealer/Garage Coverage Part premium, and Businessowners Policy (BOP) premium from March 15 to June 15. Policies must be in force at the time relief credit is applied. These actions are subject to regulatory approval.



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Aug 14-15 St Cloud 2020 NEC® Grounding & Bonding, Motor Installation Requirements, Overcurrent Protection. Mike Miller, Trainer.

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June 18	(8:00AM-10:00AM)	2020 NEC® Branch Circuit, Feeder, Svc Calcs; Tim Zinniel, Trainer.
July 14	(6:30PM-8:30PM)	2020 NEC® Grounding & Bonding. Tim Zinniel, Trainer.
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