

CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT

No. 161

**Statement of Appreciation and
Commendation to Hennepin Co.
Legislators**

June 1963

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STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION
AND COMMENDATION

APPROVED
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DATE JUN 5 1963

TO: Members of the Minnesota State Legislature representing Hennepin County districts

FROM: Citizens League Board of Directors

Now that the 1963 session of the State Legislature is a matter of history, we would like on behalf of our entire membership to convey to you and to each legislator representing a Hennepin County district our most sincere and heartfelt gratitude for a job exceedingly well done. All the people of Hennepin County will benefit immeasurably from the legislation enacted at the 1963 session and, if and to the extent they have not already done so, will soon comprehend more fully the significance of your legislative enactments. We hope and trust that this public manifestation of commendation and appreciation on our part will in some small way help in promoting a better understanding of the importance of what you have accomplished during the 1963 session.

Since the Citizens League directs its efforts exclusively to issues which affect the functioning of government at the local level, the vast majority of legislative proposals in which we interest ourselves involve bills of less than statewide application and of direct concern to the residents of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Our appraisal of the 1963 legislative session therefore is of necessity based on the record of accomplishment on these particular issues. Within this limited area of legislative action, we regard the 1963 session as one of splendid, indeed remarkable, accomplishment. In fact, your record is so exceptional that the 1963 session should be recorded as the most outstanding of any session within memory.

Without in any way wishing to minimize the importance of other legislative enactments having a direct bearing on the residents of Hennepin County, we are taking the liberty of listing here as examples only those bills with which our organization is most familiar. These bills, all of which were enacted at the 1963 session, include:

1. Legislation transferring Minneapolis General Hospital to the County. Failure to pass this bill almost certainly would have meant closing the hospital.
2. Legislation abolishing existing municipal and justice of the peace courts in Hennepin County and replacing them with a single County Court. Passage of this bill will give Hennepin County one of the finest court systems in the nation.
3. Legislation modifying the Minneapolis School District Act. Passage of this bill was imperative if the Minneapolis long-range school construction program is to be submitted to the voters either this fall or next spring and if the majority required for approval is to be reduced to a realistically attainable majority of those voting on the question.

4. Legislation granting the Hennepin County Park Reserve District additional authority to issue bonds for land acquisition. Passage of this bill will provide the necessary financial means to assure acquisition of sufficient land for major county parks to meet the needs of future generations.
5. Legislation enabling Minneapolis to become a part of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District. Passage of this legislation makes the Park Reserve District a truly county governmental unit corresponding more nearly with the people and the area to be served by the park facilities which will be provided and will assure the type of financial base necessary to the proper development of these facilities.
6. Legislation requiring the Minneapolis-St. Paul Sanitary District to develop a comprehensive plan showing precisely how the sewerage needs of the Twin Cities area are to be met. Passage of this bill was imperative if the area is, as seems likely, to be served under an extension of the existing contract system.
7. Legislation redistricting the Hennepin County Commissioner Districts and advancing the date of election in two of the five districts. Passage of this bill will do more than any other single thing to promote better city-suburban relations.
8. Increasing the maximum millage which can be levied for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Planning Commission. Passage of this bill will prevent a serious disruption in the work of this important agency.
9. Legislation replacing the existing elected Coroner system in Hennepin County with an appointive professionally qualified Medical Examiner.
10. Legislation modifying the local consent requirement for rezoning Minneapolis property. Passage of this bill was indispensable to adoption of a much-needed and long-overdue new Minneapolis zoning ordinance.

We consider enactment of legislation such as is listed above at a single legislative session lasting less than 120 days an accomplishment deserving of widespread public recognition and commendation. Although naturally certain legislators provided the leadership so essential to the attainment of this outstanding record of accomplishment, it was truly a team effort and a team victory. This team was comprised of the members of the Hennepin County House and Senate Delegations. It required the participation and the constructive cooperation of the entire delegation. It also required recognition on the part of both Minneapolis and suburban legislators that city-suburban cooperation must be a two-way street; that there must be give as well as take. Further, it required legislators to actively support and vote for legislation which was controversial within their own districts. And, it required countless hours of dedicated work on the part of legislators in attempting to resolve the numerous controversies involved in each of these bills, as well as among bills. Each of these essential ingredients was forthcoming, and the result is a record of which you and each legislator representing a Hennepin County district can justifiably be proud.