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## **Doing the Common Good Better: A Call to Citizen Action in Minnesota**

**Report of the Citizens League Study Committee on  
Civic Engagement for Minnesota**

**March, 2003**

## **Dedication**

*To the memory of John Gardner, whose wisdom and actions were a constant source of inspiration and insight, (a “bugle call right in the ear”), to the leadership of this Committee.*

*To Aidan Kershaw Hawkins, who, although only two years old, patiently sat through dozens of meetings during the course of this work. It is for the benefit of you and your generation that we offer this report, and by whom its success will be measured.*

- S.K. & J.K.

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# Doing the Common Good Better: A Call to Citizen Action in Minnesota

## Preface

The Citizens League recently turned 50 years old. Minnesota will be 150 years old in five years. In a time of momentous change, it seemed fitting and necessary for the League to do a special study to assess the status of citizen engagement in the public problem-solving arena, and to make recommendations arising from that analysis.

A group of 27 committee members, not all Citizens League members, met for nine months to discuss “Doing the Common Good Better.” Individual interviews, selected readings, personal testimony, survey questionnaires, guest speakers, and hours of discussion led the committee to this final report.

The audience for this report is unlike most Citizens League documents. It is not directed largely at one institution or specifically to one public body. Indeed, this report is offered to the Minnesota community at large – our citizens in general as well as the Citizens League in particular.

The audience for this report includes:

- Minnesota citizens and our various institutions. The document is intended to spark internal discussion and reflection on everyone’s role and activities, and how they can continue to strive for “doing the common good better” in Minnesota.
- The Citizens League Board and its leadership. The intent is to help shape the role, future direction and strategic focus of the Citizens League. This leadership is consciously reflecting on these goals, and the changes necessary to achieve them.
- Current/future Citizens League members. The goal is to highlight the fundamental mission and role of the League, and to suggest new opportunities to (re)engage with the League.

We hope this report sparks as much critical self-reflection, creativity, discussion, direction and, most importantly, hope and enthusiasm, for others as it did for the members of the committee.

# Doing the Common Good Better

## Executive Summary

Minnesota is approaching its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a State in 2008. This is a time for celebration, optimism and reflection. Where we will be as a State should be of interest to all Minnesotans. This report came to a number of conclusions about our state. Minnesota is not unique in the challenges it faces such as budget crises, transportation congestion, school completion rates, and health care costs. Nor is Minnesota unique in its need for effective and efficient public services and institutions.

But Minnesota is unique in its outstanding tradition of engaging the public in solving common problems. Citizens working together have built what we are proud of in Minnesota. Yet Minnesota's tradition of relying on its citizens for creative approaches to its public issues is threatened by lifestyle and societal changes, and institutional retreat. Our world has changed significantly. Our civic institutions have not adjusted sufficiently to this point.

This report recommends a series of specific actions to enhance Minnesota's ability to lay a strong foundation for the future. New strategies for citizen involvement are outlined in four broad areas.

Reaffirming the Role of the Citizen. All institutions should assess and act upon their civic identity and obligation. We also need to highlight and celebrate the tremendous work that is taking place right now to improve active citizenship and civic engagement within institutions.

Revitalizing the Citizen's Education. Whether it is in families, schools or the workplace, we need to encourage the skills and education needed for people to be engaged and effective citizens.

Recapturing the Citizen's Creativity. Creating new forums for discussion and debate, along with new governing models, will help us to realize the potential of citizens to solve public problems.

Restructuring Organizations – Including the Citizens League. The fundamental mission of the League is as relevant as ever. However, the League must demonstrate the capacity to take its own advice in order to continue to fill its critical role. The League must reexamine its practices and strategic relationships to achieve this mission.

This call to action affects every institution and every element of society as we approach our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a state and in a very real sense, our future is what we will make of it.

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## Minnesota 2008: A Dimmer or Brighter 'Star of the North'?

On the morning of May 11, 2008, Minnesotans will open their front doors to pick up their *Star Tribunes*, or *Bemidji Pioneers*, *Worthington Daily Globes*, or *Saint Paul Pioneer Presses*. Each will contain a front-page story about Minnesota's 150th birthday, our Sesquicentennial, reporting a glowing series of accounts about Minnesota's past. The key question is: What else will appear in that day's editions?

### Scenario One: 2008

The doorstep reader scans the headlines: "Federal Judge Considers Remedy for Urban/Suburban School Disparities"; "Crisis in Healthcare Continues"; Ads for new high-density housing units in St. Anthony promise "The End to the Two-Hour Commute!" "Mall of America Vacancy Rate Concerns City Leaders."

In the business section, there is a profile on "3M: Minnesota's First and Last Fortune 500 Company."

The Secretary of State reports low interest in upcoming municipal elections, saying "We'll be lucky if we get 40 percent turnout." On the street, lawn signs are posted for candidates representing nine political parties.

The real estate section details a new development named "Minnesota City" outside Daytona Beach, Florida, complete with Paul Bunyan and Babe statues.

The Minnesotan closes the paper, sighs and says, "At least we're not as bad as Iowa."

### Scenario Two: 2008

Same day, same porch. Same reader. Different Headlines: "Traffic Management System Cuts Commute Time 24 percent"; "Minnesota Schools Tops in the World"; "Residents Plan New Urban Village in Northeast"; "Officials from Canada Arrive to Study Healthcare Options Program"; "National United Way Honors MN Corporations for Building Citizenship and Profits"; "New Data Reveals Surge in Entrepreneurship."

The Minnesotan reads the story about the candidate debate the night before and is amazed both at the substance of the discussion and the quality of the reporting. Whatever happened to politics as a horseshoe? People are actually engaged, actually focused on the ideas!

The reader decides to read the rest of the paper on-line, and leaves the hard copy on the easy chair so Dad can read it—grateful that the new long-term care plan provides for extended home stays for him. In addition, students from a nearby high school are teaching him Amharic.

Finally, the reader makes a note to attend tomorrow's neighborhood study circle preparing for the group's testimony on alternative energy strategies at the upcoming city council meeting.

## Our Choice

*“Whatever is valued in a society flourishes there.” – Plato*

Which of these scenarios will evolve as we move closer to 2008? The outcome depends upon how much we value and how thoughtfully we reinvent our public life. Will we recognize and act on the realization that there are some issues that can only be resolved by citizens working together in the public arena for the public good?

The public stage is often dominated by big politics, big media, big business and big special interests, and they can all bring out the worst in each other. Will we see the danger of relegating citizens to paying the ticket price and remaining only as an audience? Bad results can happen when too much is decided by too few. Democracy in general, and this state in particular, depend upon the active engagement of citizens—not simply to vote—but to design, shape, evaluate; and in some cases, organize and produce public programs and public policy.

The challenge we face as Minnesotans is not that citizens are no longer interested in these roles—they are—but that the old ways of getting a hearing—playing a part in the process—are not working and what new ways of having an impact have not been fully invented or publicized. The notion of developing public policy through citizen participation (for the common good) has been supplanted by interest-based public policy proposals based on narrow, parochial interests. And because we haven’t developed a new strategy for citizens to participate in public policy, we are failing to tap the potential of citizens who have solutions or insights to our most pressing public problems.

Creative solutions to public policy issues are not likely to spring from legislators alone. They are already in critical overload. In 1982, there were 757 bills introduced in the Legislature. In 2002, there were 2,565 bills introduced—a 340 percent increase. As Jack Davies, a respected former legislator admits, “There is, in the legislature, a very low capacity for original thought. A legislator can expend his limited energies either in the judgment-passing role or in the creative role. But no one else can do the judgment role except the legislator. Originating solutions is not included as a basic function of the legislature...”

Nor are innovative ideas likely to come from public agencies. They too are under great pressure to fulfill ever more complex managerial responsibilities and significant resource constraints, leaving little time and often no mandate to devise comprehensive plans. We ask transportation engineers to build us safe roads—which they do—then we are surprised when better communities are not the result.

Neither should we rely on professional experts alone to design system reforms. Our medical care is the envy of the world; our health care system is not.

Citizenship has many dimensions—all essential to the health of the Republic.

- Citizens have a responsibility to vote, to obey the law, pay taxes, and to serve on juries.

- Citizens are also community builders, volunteers. Minnesotans have taken that task seriously. Almost 7 out of 10 citizens volunteer. Nine out of 10 give money to charities. For the third year in a row, the United Way of America ranked Minnesota as the most caring state in the United States.
- Finally, citizens are designers, inventors, and decision-makers: architects of our public strategies to solve problems. Even those too young to vote can develop and help implement solutions. For example, the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota has worked with St. Bernard grade school students to form a team to negotiate with the neighborhood Church Council and County to transform a parking lot into a playground.

Citizens do have the freedom to invent. Many of Minnesota's most creative policies have come through citizen-based efforts: charter schools, fiscal disparities, metropolitan governance, and property tax reform. (Recently, almost 5,000 ideas for cutting the budget were submitted to a website sponsored by Governor Pawlenty and Finance Commissioner McElroy.)

People like Roy Wilkins, Sister Kenny, the nuns who designed the Mayo Clinic, and hundreds of others less famous, were not experts, legislators or talk show hosts, but rather citizens who built institutions that transformed Minnesota. We need to make way for a new generation of these citizen pioneers.

### **The Problem: Old Ways of Engaging Citizens Are Not Working**

*"The trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be."  
– Paul Valery (Turn-of-the-Century French poet and Essayist)*

The old ways of capitalizing on citizens' ingenuity grew out of lifestyles and institutional commitments that no longer exist. They depended on people who chose to devote an exceptional amount of time to study—organized by a variety of think tanks, policy shops, research groups and citizen collectives. Individuals, businesses, and philanthropists grounded in Minnesota funded these studies. These groups could further mobilize people "with standing", such as business leaders, newspaper editors, and union leaders. To acknowledge this legacy is not to romanticize the past, which was not perfect; but to recognize our history and illustrate that the constraints of the present require new approaches for the future.

Our lifestyles have changed dramatically and universally in the last 50 years. While individual citizens may be adjusting to these changes, our civic institutions and practices have not.

How do we reenergize democracy in Minnesota? How do we re-conceive "politics" to recognize that it is our way to get things done? How do we develop new strategies to reintroduce the citizen to public problem solving at the local, regional, and state level?

Can the North Star's hope and promise be as inspiring in 2008 as it was in 1858? How can we serve the common good better?



## What Has Changed?

*“There is nothing permanent except change” – Heraclitus (Greek philosopher), 500 BC*

The fundamental change in public affairs is primarily one of “scale.” Everything is bigger, faster, broader, and more complicated—not unlike the changes in the private economy.

Our lifestyles have been affected by an acceleration of time, space, and information. For example:

### More Jobs and Family Demands. Less Time

Two incomes are needed for most families to achieve their higher standard of living. Minnesotans are the hardest working people in the nation. Our state ranks first in the percentage of women in the workforce and in the number of people holding multiple jobs. Minnesota ranks fourth in the workforce participation rate of men. In addition, commuting time has increased. Organized activities for children have expanded, demanding more time, attention and resources from parents. Requirements for professional development in jobs have grown. These factors together put many families in a high stress, “time starvation” mode that limits their ability to pursue civic interests.

### More Geography. Less Community Focus

The tremendous population and job dispersal in the Twin Cities region has dramatically affected our sense of place and where and how we can exercise our civic power. Less than 50 years ago, most of the region lived in the two core cities. In the 2000 Census only about 25 percent of the population now live in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Our regional community is about 100 miles across spanning 24 counties and two states. We no longer live, work, shop and play in one community. The 2000 Census tells us 24 percent of the Minnesota population was born in another state; 6 percent in another country, and nearly one half of the population moves within the State every five years. Consequently, few residents are familiar with the entire region.

### More Information. Less Integration

Citizens are bombarded with a virtual “blizzard” of media, information and entertainment. There are now more than 200 TV channels. As Jack Uldrich notes in his upcoming book, *The Exponential Economy*, “the content on the web doubles every 3-6 months. This year, IBM will unveil the “Millipede”, which will be capable of holding the equivalent of 25 million printed textbooks on a device the size of a postage stamp.”

However, as the volume of information increases exponentially; as the emergence of new wireless capabilities adds to this onslaught of data; and as the continued convergence of media and news makes the accuracy and tone of the information suspect; we cannot forget that the need for citizens to discern, to distill and to decide is more important than ever.

These universal forces of decreasing time, expanding space, and exploding information have

created new challenges for citizen participation. Yet the need for citizen engagement and leadership remains critical. As our Governor stated in his State of the State address:

“We face an unprecedented global and financial crisis. Perhaps that is the privilege of our problem: to hear our own call to arms, our own call to service, our own call to sacrifice and our own call to leadership.”

### How Have Our Institutions Responded?

*“Most human institutions that fall short of their goals do not do so because of stupidity, or faulty doctrines, but because of internal decay and rigidification. They grow stiff in the joints. They get in a rut. They go to seed.” – John Gardner, Founder of ‘Independent Sector’*

Many of the institutions that had a traditional role in connecting citizens to their government, and to public problem solving, have withered. Other newer institutions have yet to find their “civic voice.” For example:

- The Marginalization of Political Parties. The two major political parties at times in the past saw their role to: facilitate inquiry, provide a forum for discussion even at the local and neighborhood level, seek a wide base of members, provide an initial round of building consensus around a workable agenda, and protect their elected officials who supported necessary long-term reforms over short-term fixes.

Increasingly, political parties limit discussion, restrict members to sub-caucuses or develop litmus tests on certain issues, surrender to professional campaign consultants rather than rely on citizen volunteers, and through negative advertising, attempt to discourage turnout by targeted voters.

The result is diminishing participation in precinct caucuses and political parties even though they continue to hold the most critical responsibility to select candidates for office, and provide the first opportunity for building consensus in the political and policy process.

- The Globalization of the Business Community. Minnesota now ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation in international trade. 3M does more than one-half of its business outside the United States. Target Corporation sees Minnesota as dropping to its 6<sup>th</sup> largest market. Seventy percent of our largest corporations have been merged or acquired. The Twin Cities is no longer the headquarters for homegrown Honeywell, Northwestern Bell, Northwestern National Bank, and Burlington Northern. Three of the chief executives of Minnesota’s 50 largest companies don’t live in the state.

As our biggest companies have widened their geographic focus, they have narrowed or eliminated their public affairs agenda. Instead of participating in broad-based civic groups, today’s chief executive officer increasingly limits his or her participation to business and specific organizations. There is less attention to the community and more focus on marketing. In fact, one corporate executive acknowledged that corporate

philanthropic contributions are determined by the question, “How do you augment the corporate brand by doing good deeds?” Another lost venue for citizen/employees to connect to their government. A loss too of the leadership skills that these business leaders bring to community and civic issues.

- The “Personalization” of the Media. Most Americans get 80 percent of their news from television. Increasingly, however, that news coverage does not focus on governance or policy issues. For example, a recent research report analyzed 2,454 half-hour local TV news broadcasts in the 50 biggest media markets from September 18 – October 4, 2002. It found 53 percent contained no coverage of political campaigns. Of those that did, the average length of the report was 80.5 seconds.

Furthermore, responding to readership surveys, major newspapers have cut government reporting in favor of health, sports, entertainment and business. According to John Finnegan, former editor/assistant publisher of the Saint Paul Pioneer Press, “The decision making process is not seen as important.” Fewer and fewer journalists seek out the more complex, textured analyses of policy options. They cover the conflict on issues: who’s for it and who’s against it. They capture stories around the extreme positions and rely on anecdotes that entertain readers rather than inform them.

- The Decline of Civic/Public Affairs Organizations. There were many places a citizen could go to help identify emerging public issues and develop innovative responses. These nonpartisan citizen based organizations—idea incubators—have all but disappeared. Minnesota has lost the following organizations:
  - o Upper Midwest Council;
  - o Itasca Seminar;
  - o Spring Hill;
  - o Jefferson Center;
  - o Northern Minnesota Citizens League,
  - o Countryside Council; and
  - o Interstudy

Even as these old ways of developing citizens, informing them, organizing them, and capturing their creativity have receded, new and formidable barriers to citizen action have emerged.

### **Additional Barriers to Progress**

The multiplication of pressure groups. In a democracy, people have a right and sometimes a duty to organize and to advocate around a single issue. Through citizen mobilization we have laws against child labor and discrimination, for example. But any asset unexamined can become a liability. Minnesota has seen a tremendous growth in special interest groups. There were more than 1300 registered lobbyists in the 2002 session.

Furthermore, as David Broder observed at the Citizens League 2002 Annual Meeting, “... these interest groups pursuing legitimately their own agenda have become far more powerful as blocking agents than the political parties and political leaders have in building support for

their change.” So looking at the crowded table and the difficulty of enacting change, the citizen asks, “Is my effort worthwhile? Will I make a difference?”

The glorification of experts. Perhaps as a consequence of the increasing complexity of the world, and certainly as a result of time constraints, we have come to rely too heavily on experts and a professionalized and consumer-oriented approach to citizenship and problem solving. While analysis and expertise are always essential to problem solving, experts can inadvertently intimidate or exclude citizens from these governing processes. As John McKnight<sup>1</sup> said: “when the capacity to define the problem becomes a professional prerogative, citizens no longer exist. The prerogative removes the citizen as problem-definer, much less problem-solver.” Citizens cannot become passive or powerless, or abdicate their responsibility to govern.

The simplification and polarization of the political agenda. Most people understand that the vast majority of issues are multifaceted, but there is an increasing propensity to discuss these issues at polar extremes. In fact, Harlan Cleveland in his book, Nobody in Charge, states: “Two sidedness is built deep into American culture--two boxers in a ring...two teams on the athletic field...two adversaries in the courtroom—yet in problem solving outside these artificial constructs, there is almost no such thing as a two sided problem.”

But our political dialogue becomes a never-ending high decibel debate at the extremes often with a demonizing tone:

- Heroes/villains
- Liberal/conservative
- Pro/anti
- Raise tax/cut service
- Politicians/real people.

Such a two dimensional analysis creates false choices and bad policies. Such an uncivil and cynical climate reduces every discussion to a debate where ideas are fodder and participants are combatants. The concepts of compromise and accommodation seem to have been lost in the policy-making process.

In this world, politics become just another form of entertainment, a spectator sport. If there is no fight, there is no news.

The consequences of reducing our public discussion to edgy sound bites and name-calling are corrosive. We lose leadership. Authority cannot survive without trust. We lose momentum. It is difficult to discern the common ground necessary for action. We lose faith. Democracy depends on having confidence in our ability to govern ourselves. We run a great risk to demean the people and the process by which we fix our mutual problems.

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<sup>1</sup> John McKnight is an author and Professor of Communication Studies and Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University.

## Minnesota's Vulnerability

*“People attribute Minnesota’s success largely to the quality of life. But most of this is not God-given. Rather, the livability of this place is made.” – Ted Kolderie<sup>2</sup>*

These trends, whether they are lifestyle changes, institutional transformations or new barriers, all seem to conspire against the citizen participating substantively in the public arena. So what is at stake? Why the concern? What is the urgency? Who cares?

If we do not find new ways to engage citizens in our public life, we will weaken our public institutions, lose our competitive advantage, our economic vitality, and our quality of life. For what has made Minnesota unique is the product of our public heritage.

We can't boast about climate or scenic wonders or superior location. What has made Minnesota attractive comes primarily from our public work.

- Our schools providing a well-educated workforce;
- Our healthcare advances making us a productive center for innovation;
- Our concern for protecting the environment;
- Our social conscience in helping those who are ill or in need; and
- Our commitment to the common good.

As Ted Kolderie outlined in his paper, “Cold Sunbelt,” much of what makes up the quality of life in the Twin Cities and Minnesota has been built through active citizenship, strong civic institutions, and a commitment to this place.

Minnesota has an unsurpassed wealth of citizenship and traditions. We will need to honor, revitalize and retool these assets to confront the issues critical to the health and success of our state.

In the course of interviewing people for this report, we heard a recurring theme:

- “I’m uneasy. We’re living off of yesterday’s work.”
- “I feel Minnesota is coasting.”
- “I fear Minnesota is losing its civic edge. We are no longer ahead of the curve.”
- “Tell Minnesotans that if we don’t do something about our most important problems, we may be fiddling while Rome burns.”

Unless we find new ways to engage people in public problem solving, Minnesota is at risk. Institutions which citizens traditionally used to get their ideas into “the public square” are distracted, dysfunctional or overwhelmed.

Yet perhaps never in Minnesota’s history is citizen creativity so crucial to our future. The budget crisis, which affects every individual, every institution and every level of government, may reasonably be expected to last for years. Every program, every service, every provider,

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<sup>2</sup> Senior Associate at the Center for Policy Studies, and former Citizens League Executive Director and Editorial writer and reporter for the Star Tribune.

every arrangement, every tax, every fee, every assessment will be under review. Opportunities for reform, redesign, restructure will open. Every incentive system, or lack thereof, will be scrutinized.

There are few times in a state's history when so many decisions will be made in such a concentrated time which will affect so many for so long.

The beginning of the Twenty-first Century will put heavy demands on our leaders and heavy obligations on our citizens. Ultimately, they are and should be the problem solvers. In Michael Hartoonian's<sup>3</sup> words, "Democracy is a script in which all citizens can play a heroic role. Democratic culture ... offers answers to the questions – what is there to work for to struggle for ... And how can I invest my time and skills to improve and protect my culture. The heroes are those who work for the common purpose...for without common wealth, there can be no private wealth."

### **The Opportunity: What Can Be Done About It**

*"We must come to see that human progress never rolls on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men and women ... who use time creatively and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right."*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Our current situation provides an unprecedented opportunity to build on the historic success of our State, harness the creativity and potential of its citizens, and address our most important public issues and opportunities. What will we begin building today that will be celebrated in 150 years?

If the need is to reenergize democracy to address these issues, and if the problem is the inadequacy of our current institutions and practices, we must focus our efforts on new strategies, new institutions and new opportunities for citizen engagement.

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<sup>3</sup>Michael Hartoonian is a Professor of Education at the University of Minnesota, Department of Education and Instruction.

## ACTION PLAN

**Reaffirm the role of the citizen.  
Revitalize the citizen's education.  
Recapture the citizen's creativity.  
Restructure institutions and organizations.**

### Reaffirm The Citizen's Role.

*"We don't need leaders to tell us what to do. That's not the American style of leadership in any case. We do need men and women in every community in the land who will accept a special responsibility to advance the public interest, root out corruption, combat injustice and care about the continued vitality of this land. We need such people to help us clarify and define the choices before us."*

– John Gardner

Convene a Statewide Summit on Citizenship. Such a conference, called by the Governor, would be co-sponsored by educational institutions, the faith community, the political parties, business, labor and nonprofit organizations. The purpose would be to:

- 1) Issue a call to action, asking all institutions to assess and act upon their civic responsibilities. We must remember that in a democracy, every institution has dual responsibilities – its specific private responsibility, and its public civic responsibility. We all serve as models for one another. Such a review would include, for example:
  - The political parties to implement and recommend long-overdue changes in the caucus and electoral process that will remove barriers to participation, and dramatically increase the number of people that take part in these processes.
  - The philanthropic community to assess its role in a changing civic landscape. The Blandin Foundation has seized this opportunity to invest in a community leadership program. Although all organizations are under pressure, how can we avoid a situation where “foundations, despite having greater independence of action than any other institution...too often display a trendy orientation toward short-term rather than long-term outcomes, instead of working to reform basic structures of society?” (John Adams<sup>4</sup>)
  - Social service organizations and nonprofits, to evaluate how their governance and service-delivery promote civic and self-governance skills, not dependency and passivity.
  - The Legislature to consider a “citizen impact statement” for legislation (not just a fiscal impact statement). One approach might be to charge a group of former legislative leaders and other sector leaders—business, nonprofits, faith communities, etc., with crafting a statement that could be applied to some of the thousands of proposed legislative bills each session. Just as there is now a fiscal impact statement, so too, it would make sense to look at the citizenship and civic institution impact of pending legislation as appropriate.
  - The business community to assess their internal and board governance processes, as

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<sup>4</sup> John S. Adams is a Board Member of the Citizens League, and a faculty member at the Humphrey Institute and in the University of Minnesota geography department.

well as how they encourage staff to participate in civic affairs (from volunteering, to serving on boards, to running for office). The Cuningham Group, for example, sponsors a monthly “Urban Currents Forum” to inspire citizens to make meaningful change in their communities (also see Appendix).

- Professional associations, to ensure that their members have opportunities to build civic, as well as economic and personal, wealth. For example, the American Bar Association could revisit its policy to only recognize pro-bono work as legal advice to non-profit groups or needy individuals. Such a narrow definition deprives the public affairs community of the analytical skills attorneys can bring to the question of systemic change, which could be equally as important in serving people’s needs.
  - The media, particularly radio and television, should make a concerted effort to explore the complexity of public issues and the process of resolving them. For example, it would be a simple but rewarding undertaking for the media to program three to four guests having a discussion, rather than rely on two people debating extreme positions. (The print media and public TV and radio have recently shown more comprehensive coverage of budget issues.)
  - The faith community, to continue to develop and explore models for teaching people how to explore and discuss difficult public issues that affect both the internal church and the wider community. The skills learned in such a setting have tremendous benefit to our public discourse. Furthermore, the faith community should be able to help extend our horizons and prepare us for dealing with concerns that go beyond short-term fixes. For example, the Minnesota Council of Churches has launched a comprehensive interfaith effort on climate change. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America has developed a self-help guide for congregations entitled “Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues.” This initiative is designed to help people develop skills to deliberate and converse civilly about potentially divisive social issues.
  - The higher education community should assess its performance in building the commonwealth. The University of Minnesota, under the leadership of President Brunicks, has initiated a significant public engagement effort, designed to strengthen the university’s public mission.
- 2) Highlight the need for, and work of, active citizens. One way to draw attention to the power of citizen action would be to honor citizen entrepreneurs. Design a special award to give broad recognition to a Minnesota citizen entrepreneur each year. Make this a prized recognition. This could include someone who has designed or implemented a strategic public policy innovation, created a civic educational or action program in their place of work, or reformed or revitalized institutions that directly affect the political process involving the political parties, the media and the public employee.

### **Revitalize the Citizen’s Education and Practice.**

*“Democracy is a difficult type of government. It requires the highest qualities of self-discipline, restraint, a willingness to make commitments and sacrifices for the general interest, and also it requires knowledge.”*

*– President John F. Kennedy, Dublin Castle, June 28, 1963*



- 1) Recognize the Fundamental Role of Families. Like most life-long lessons, building a tradition and understanding of active citizenship begins at home. Family life and structure have changed tremendously in the last 10 years and will continue to change dramatically as we move farther into this century. Families need support and reinforcement to develop and pass on the value of active citizenship to their children. There is a need to:
  - Develop new methods for families to communicate the value and meaning of active citizenship;
  - Explore ways to support all communities and families in Minnesota to act on and realize their civic authority;
  - Design a way to address the constant change in family's lives and ways to encourage the family's value of active citizenship; and
  - Promote the value of parents fostering active citizens.

The challenge we face is in acknowledging the essential, changing and varied nature of family life to our civic health, and in ensuring that we create new ways for these families to participate in public life and civic affairs (from schedule flexibility, to child care, to new family-based civic education tools).

- 2) Revitalize K-12 Curriculum. One of the primary missions of a public school is to develop enlightened citizens.

While many agendas have pushed to the head of the line in public schools, with a few exceptions, civics education on how to become a good citizen is virtually extinct. Promoting citizenship was one of the reasons public schools were created in the first place. Students were to understand that this was the only country founded not on geography or ethnicity, but on shared beliefs. Schools needed to prepare students not only for self-sufficiency, but also for self-government.

Yet a recent study at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University found that only 27 percent of the college students believed that political engagement was the best way to address the nation's problems.

The Wilder Research Center Foundation discovered when they asked what is the most effective way people can have an impact on their community, that voting and influencing government decisions only received 22 percent of the vote.

One could be disheartened by the report of a journalism professor who asked his students "where do you learn about public affairs – cable, newspapers, MPR?" "No", they said "Tom Bernard" (local drive time radio host).

And one would hope that not many students overheard the Minnesota civics teacher who was heard saying, "I hate politicians and I don't vote."

- Students must understand the philosophy of a democracy, and the functioning of a democracy.
- Students must also comprehend, practice, and benefit from systems of self-governance.

How well are we preparing students to be full participants in a democratic society in terms of knowledge, skills, and tools; and how can these elements be taught, modeled, and practiced within the K-12 environment.

- Students must learn how the genius of a democratic society is the ability to hold two seemingly contradictory ideas at the same time, e.g. diversity and unity. It is dangerous to emphasize one concept over the other. Both are necessary. “*E Pluribus Unum!*”

We ask the Department of Education to review the content and impact of the K-12 civic curriculum. The current discussion about graduation standards provides an opportunity for re-viewing our commitment to building active citizenship.

3) Create Civic Workplaces. As lives for all citizens have grown more busy and complicated, workplaces are increasingly important civic cultures. As one member of the panel commented, “How can you expect people to be civic and democratic when they come home to their families and communities, if they weren’t expected or encouraged to be civic and democratic during their workday?” It matters not if you’re working at a construction site, a place of worship, a hospital, or software company, we can practice civic skills and good governance which will not only enhance our productivity but also prepare us for the public arena.

The Minnesota Active Citizenship Initiative (MACI) (<http://www.activecitizen.org>) is using a “civic organizing” approach to develop new civic leaders, civic systems, and civic policies in Minnesota, primarily in work settings. Over 100 people in the Initiative are working within congregations, businesses, schools, nonprofits and other institutions to help redefine “active citizenship”, and to create policies and structure that produce more active citizens. MACI provides a framework, (civic organizing), that addresses not just the need for and ideals of active citizenship, but the concrete political and base-building steps necessary to make these institutional and social changes. One demonstration within the program, Civics Incorporated, works to develop civic leadership skills with people ages 22-35. Another member of the business demonstration, Kowalski’s Supermarkets, is using civic organizing to demonstrate how a private business can become more civic in terms of its management, relation to the community, and relation to its vendors and partners. MACI has developed a specific “Civic Policy Agenda” that begins to provide the details on these goals and strategies.

### Recapture the Citizen’s Creativity

*“If the 20<sup>th</sup> century was one of social transformations, the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs to be one of social and political innovations, whose nature cannot be so clear to us now as their necessity.”*  
- Peter Drucker

As we have said, the challenge before us is one of means: how to use the energy, capacity and good will of citizens to solve public problems. If our existing means are at best inadequate, what are we to do?

Rather than defaulting to the big-system solutions of our past, how can we use entrepreneurship and innovative governing structures to develop new solutions for intractable public

problems? Our challenge is to create the environment where this, the democratic social and political “inventions” Professor Drucker speaks of, can be invented:

- Where civic-minded citizens can contribute to the deliberative and governing processes, and impact solutions;
- Where new civic institutions can be created; and
- Where the innovative policies necessary to sustain this civic health can be developed and implemented.

1) New Forums. New forums, some ad hoc informal, some long-term with more structure, some with staff and consultants, some with volunteers, can be used by citizens to study issues and generate ideas for the common good. Examples of these new formats include (also see Appendix for more information):

- Minnesota e-Democracy, which is an evolving experiment in online political and civic debate and engagement.
- The Center for Policy Studies, which uses consultants and volunteers to study and make recommendations on policy issues such as the K-12 education system.
- The Civic Caucus, an informal group of 50 people that relies on regular meetings and intensive use of e-mail to study and make policy recommendations on issues such as transportation reform in the region.
- The Early Childhood Education Group, started by former Minneapolis Mayor Don Fraser, to address the needs of vulnerable children under the age of five.

Surely there is great possibility in these emerging tools to broaden and deepen public involvement in the public good. It would be fair to state that web-based citizen participation for the common good is in its infancy, but that it can be an effective tool, when combined with face-to-face discussion, debate, and public relationship-relationship-building. Regional organizations around the country make heavy use of websites to supplement face-to-face citizen study committees, and to enhance in-depth coverage of campaign issues. (See <http://www.issuespa.org>.)

2) New Governing Institutions: Civic “Co-Ops”

Another approach to civic engagement is to formally provide the authority for these solutions to be developed and tested by the people impacted by the problem or opportunity: to allow and reward stakeholders who are impacted by a public problem to build ownership in the solution, i.e. seeing teachers as owners of their schools or programs within traditional schools. These “civic co-ops” might emerge in situations that meet several criteria:

- Where there is a discrete problem or opportunity whose solutions would benefit the larger community;
- Where there are overlapping or competing authorities and organizational involvements, especially from government and nonprofit organizations;
- Where more resources are producing the same, or worse, results; and
- Where motivated people impacted by the problem are ready to act.

By formally involving the groups actually impacted by the situation, and by providing them with the authority to overcome traditional organizational or bureaucratic boundaries, could they come up with innovative solutions? Could these solutions form the basis for new policies? By pooling existing resources, could they do “more with the same” or better yet, “more with less”?

### **Restructure Institutions and Organizations (Starting with the Citizens League)**

*“The Citizens League makes a difference in our community and in our quality of life...It’s a high-leverage organization that stimulates its members and gets the most from their thinking. The payoff is high, both in creating change and in personal satisfaction.”*

*- John Rollwagen, venture capitalist.*

*“To promote the public interest in Minnesota by involving citizens in identifying and framing critical public policy choices, forging recommendations and advocating their adoption”*

*– Citizens League Mission Statement*

As we move toward our State’s 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we have an opportunity for individual institutions and organizations to evaluate how their own work, and their work with others, helps to achieve the mission of “doing the common good better” in Minnesota. The findings of this report should serve as a guide in this process.

It is the Citizens League’s opportunity, and obligation, to do this for itself.

The Citizens League has often called upon other organizations to show the courage to respond realistically to changing circumstances. In the coming months and years, the League must demonstrate the capacity to take its own advice in order to continue to fill its critical role.

For a half-century, the Citizens League prescribed a regimen of policy changes for the state and the region, and has built credibility with public officials and the media as a nonpartisan problem solving institution dedicated to citizen involvement around the broad public interest.

The basic mission of the Citizens League continues to be sound. However, like the State as a whole, the League needs a new framework to carry forward to the next generation.

- 1) Program. Many of the League program topics and specific recommendations over the past 15 years are as important today as the day they were initiated. The League must continue to play a critical role advocating for the implementation of these recommendations. (See Appendix for list of recent Citizens League reports.)
- 2) Issue Study Process. The League should evaluate how its study processes need to be refined to build and maintain participation. Essential to this is continuing to build strong working partnerships with other similar/complementary organizations.
- 3) Education/Leadership Development. The League offers a rich environment for leadership development. The League could more consciously organize its leadership training potential

for students, governmental prospects and high potential employees, as well as reward leaders who show strong “civic entrepreneurship”.

The League should also consider creating an Institute for Public Affairs Fellows which could provide academic credit for students in the State’s public and private higher education institutions, while the students assist the League in its research and communications.

- 4) Implementation. With the increasing difficulty of getting ideas to move because of the trends already discussed, the League will have to devote more time to the implementation of its recommendations. Much of the League’s reputation is built on the record of policies adopted.

With this new framework, the Citizens League, by deliberating on important public issues; educating citizens on public choices; activating citizens on issues that they care about; and orchestrating other strategic partners should continue to serve as a “lever” for civic action and policy making in Minnesota.

### Conclusion: A Brighter ‘Star of the North’

In five years, the State of Minnesota will be 150 years old with an ever more diverse population of more than five million people, and with a metropolitan region more than 100 miles in diameter. The question is, what path will we choose and how will we choose it for this expanding and complex region and state?

In this report, we have laid out both opportunities and challenges that we will face. There clearly will be choices to make that will affect which of the paths or scenarios we will walk down in the future. Whether we are at a crisis point, or the dawn of a new and exciting era, depends in part on our vision for ourselves.

More than a decade ago, Governor Carlson involved more than 10,000 citizens in a vision-building process for the state that became “Minnesota Milestones”. Governor Ventura’s “Big Plan” struck many of the same themes but did so with little public participation. When done well, a vision-building process can help draw people from very different backgrounds together to build a view of what we want to achieve together — the common good. There are many forces that divide and splinter us, but a unifying vision for the year 2020 for example could give us the glue to pull the pieces of an ever more fragmented region and state together.

A process such as Minnesota Milestones or “Chicago 2020” can focus us on a common vision and build a common agenda for a future. Such a vision can help us to stay on course and to make better decisions about how we govern ourselves, how we invest public resources and our private and public time for the common good.

This process will almost certainly reveal that we share a basic vision, and have much more in common than we realize.

The core vision of the United States still comes from the Declaration of Independence of 1776. We seek life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Thomas Jefferson’s original draft has these words, “...life, liberty and the pursuit of public happiness.”

However, Benjamin Franklin edited out the word, “public” from “public happiness” in part because he was sure that generations to follow would always understand that happiness comes from our civic commitments to each other.

Changing institutions takes leadership and flexibility and vision. But more than anything else, it needs citizens to see themselves for what they are: the dynamic power to create, to transform, and to rejuvenate.

Around the ceiling of the Minnesota State Senate chamber is a quotation from Daniel Webster:

**“Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions and promote its great interests and see whether we also, in our generation, may not perform something worth to be remembered.”**

## Appendix

### Web Sites Featuring Innovative Civic Strategies and Information

- Citizens League of Minnesota, <http://www.citizensleague.net>
- Minnesota Active Citizenship Initiative, <http://www.activecitizen.org>
- Humphrey Institute's Center for Democracy and Citizenship, <http://www.publicwork.org>
- Minnesota e-Democracy <http://www.e-democracy.org>
- Civics Incorporated, <http://www.civicsinc.org>
- Jacksonville, FL Community Council, <http://www.jcci.org>
- Chicago 2020, <http://www.chicagometropolis2020.org/>
- Issues PA, <http://www.issuespa.net>
- Austin American-Statesman series on "Cities of Ideas", <http://www.austin360.com/aas/specialreports/citiesofideas>

### Examples of New Forums for Citizen Input and Policy Recommendation

- E-Democracy: The Twin Cities is a seedbed of experimentation for political issue engagement online. Local civic entrepreneur Steven Clift has nurtured this experiment. Like the Citizens League, [www.e-democracy.org](http://www.e-democracy.org) is non-partisan and oriented to increasing citizen participation. To demonstrate the potential of this approach, go to [www.issuespa.net](http://www.issuespa.net) and examine a nation-leading example of keeping citizens up to date on the positions of candidates, on what they say, and how their statements compare to a set of actual facts about the issues.
- The Center for Policy Studies is a Minnesota based nonprofit with a small board of directors that engages consultants and volunteers as needed to manage various initiatives. Currently the Center focuses on promoting fundamental change and restructuring in the K-12 education system (e.g., open sector, chartered schools, teacher ownership of professional practice organizations, alternative schools and e-learning). The Center is a "virtual" organization and conducts much of its business online. Recently a book, Teacher as Owners: A Key to Revitalizing Public Education, was created by a group of 16 volunteers and consultants who have experience in professional practice organizations and/or education policy or practice. The group met monthly and also communicated on-line for a year. A volunteer who is a retired business executive edited the book.
- Cunningham Group "Urban Currents Forum": This monthly forum is designed to inspire residents to make meaningful change in their communities. Invited speakers cover issues that affect the quality of life in the metro area, such as historic preservation, what the Twin Cities will need to do to remain economically competitive in the new economy, and the role of higher education in our future. Guests from varied professions as well as Cunningham Group staff actively participate in the topic discussions, which allows for greater understanding and impact for each individual.

- The Civics Caucus is a small informal group that meets regularly but reaches out electronically to 50 regular respondents to develop policy papers. Over the past year, four reports have been developed. The most recent release “Untangling Traffic Congestion” should add to Minnesota’s intense discussion on transportation.
- Early Childhood Education. It was after Don Fraser had served in Congress and as Mayor of Minneapolis that he helped inspire a program addressing the urgent needs and care for our state’s most vulnerable children...those under age 5. After years of study and analysis, citizen Fraser and others have created a Minnesota-based initiative. Ready 4K...whose objective is to assure that all of Minnesota’s youngest children get the stimulation, encouragement and consistent attention they need to thrive.

### **Citizens League Studies Completed Between 1992 and 2003**

Over the past decade the Citizens League issued reports and statements that help set the agenda and provide a “first draft” for policy solutions for complex issues facing Minnesota. Starting with the most recently issued reports and moving back in time, here is a listing of Citizens League reports since 1992.

In February 2003, the report entitled: Getting Online Government Back on Track: How Minnesota Can Capture Savings and Improve Customer Service made the case for a strengthened push on web-enabled government. The report garnered editorial support and stories from both major local newspapers and appears to be on track for adoption by the incoming administration.

In December 2002, the report on the electric energy system in the state garnered editorial support and has been the subject of an hour long hearing in the Minnesota Senate to date with several bills under development relating to the study. The report was entitled: Powering Up Minnesota’s Energy Future: Act Now on a Long-term Vision.

In August 2001, the League issued a report entitled: A Failing Grade for School Completion with the startling fact that barely half of the two core cities’ ninth graders graduate on time four years later. The report suggested a number of strategies to increase student and school achievement and the statistics were cited in the Governor’s 2003 State of the State speech.

In January 2001, the League issued two reports on mental health. The first was on mental health and the workplace entitled: Mental Health in the Workplace: One in Five Employees and was directed to addressing mental health concerns of those employed or needing employment. The second report entitled: Meeting Every Child’s Mental Health Needs: A Public Priority has been followed up with a foundation funded task force to reshape the woefully inadequate children’s mental health system in Minnesota.

In August 2000, the recommendations in the League’s report entitled: Assessing Minnesota’s Property Tax: Improving Affordability for Homeowners were essentially folded into the Administration’s proposal that became part of the most significant property tax reform in a decade in the state.



In November 1999, the League issued a report entitled: From Jobs for Workers to Workers for Jobs: Better Workforce Training for Minnesota. The report highlighted the needs for increasing skill levels in the workforce and suggested a number of strategies including the much greater use of post-secondary educational options for technical education institutions for at-risk youth. The state was asked to adopt a “K-14” view of schooling noting that high school graduation was no longer the ticket to a job that paid a family living wage.

In September 1999, the League issued a report entitled: Seniors with Disabilities in 2030. This report looked at the aging of people with disabilities and of aging related disabilities and how the state should prepare for a much-increased demand for services by overhauling a number of policy areas.

In May 1999, the League issued a report entitled: What’s on the Public Agenda that detailed some of the contemporary issues in public leadership and how we might strengthen and sustain those acting as leaders in our region.

In December 1998, the League issued: A New Wrinkle on Aging: Baby Steps to 2030 that detailed trends and policy responses to those trends with the suggestion that acting sooner rather than later would allow a smoother transition to a much changed demographic in the future.

In November 1998, the League issued: Help Wanted: More Opportunities than People on the shifting labor market that showed strong shortages in skilled occupational levels and falling wages for lower skilled workers. Strategies to address economic development in changed times were suggested.

In January 1998, the League issued a report on the University of Minnesota and its role in sustaining the growth and vitality of the state and region. The report was entitled: A Competitive Place in the Quality Race: Putting the University of Minnesota in the Nation’s Top Five Public Research Universities. It contained a number of recommendations for improving the standing of the University.

In July 1997, the League released a report entitled: It Takes a Region to Build Livable Communities -- An Urban Growth Strategy for the Twin Cities Metro Region. The report suggested a number of strategies for increasing the “recycling” of urban areas rather than so-called “green field” sites. The Metropolitan Livable Communities Act incorporated a number of elements from the report including demonstrations of transit related mixed income mixed use projects that now number in the dozens in the metropolitan area.

In February 1997, the League issued a report entitled: Straight A’s for Minnesota’s Schools with twenty recommendations for improving student achievement in the state. Many of the recommendations were put into law.

In September 1996, the League issued the results of a two-year study process on how to position the metropolitan region for competition in an increasingly globalized economy. The report was entitled: Compete Globally, Thrive Locally: What the Public Sector Should Do to Help the Greater Twin Cities Region Prosper. The report suggested a large-scale private

public partnership for research “pump priming” in the state called the Northstar Research Coalition that has passed the Minnesota Senate on two separate occasions.

In August 1995, the League issued a report entitled: Building a Legacy of Better Value: Choose Reform, Not Declining Quality. The report articulated five principles for better value in public spending that have been used in budget discussions since.

In January 1995, the League issued a report entitled: Effective Transit: Invest in Access to Jobs and Services. The report identified a number of “lowest cost” solutions to access, mobility and low-income support for the metropolitan region and an alternative budget for transportation investment.

In May 1994, the League issued a report entitled: The Case for a Regional Housing Policy in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The report described issues in affordability and discrimination and offered suggestions on improving housing access.

In July 1993, the League issued a report entitled: Minnesota's Budget Problem: A Crisis of Quality, Cost and Fairness. This report first articulated the five spending principles for better value of public spending including targeting and long-term economic growth.

In April 1993, the League issued a report entitled: Regional Challenges and Regional Governance. The report suggested revisions in structuring of regional agencies. Most of the recommendations were adopted in law by the Legislature.

In June 1992, the League issued a report entitled: Results for Citizens, Options for Officials. The report recommended “competitive sourcing” of public services, greater use of shared services and a Best Practices Review of local government services. The latter was passed into law and has resulted in a number of reports on how to improve core local public services.

In May 1992, the League issued a report entitled: Reform the Electoral Process, Restore the Public Trust. This report was directed to redistricting reforms, and campaign finance reforms. These were used in subsequent legislative drafting efforts.

In February 1992, the League issued a report entitled: Health-Care Access for All Minnesotans. The priorities for coverage recommended in the report and funding strategies were incorporated into subsequent law in the state.

## Charge to the Study Committee

### History and Current Context

The last half-century has been a remarkable period for Minnesota. This region has thrived since World War II because people here made things happen. The demand to be more than the “frozen northland” came from many quarters: media, government, the business community, non-profits, citizen organizations and the public as a whole. These sectors were willing to address broad system-level reforms that resulted in innovations such as the Minnesota Miracle, tax base sharing, the Metropolitan Council, and parental choice in public schools.

But a number of signs indicate we may be resting on our laurels. Those traditionally involved in public policy work encounter new pressures. Are our institutions up to the task of addressing current and emerging problems? Do we need to reinvest in Minnesota’s civic infrastructure to keep up with our challenges?

### Issue

A core issue is the fundamental process by which Minnesota addresses its most important public problems. If Minnesota is to have a leadership position and a competitive edge, we must examine and work to continually improve and strengthen our problem solving capacity.

### Recommendation

For 50 years the Citizens League has been an independent and non-partisan voice for solutions to important public problems and challenges. It has demonstrated its ability to capture and advocate new ideas to enhance the common good in Minnesota in many areas of concern. But for the League to build into the future, it must understand and address new realities and prepare to be influential in this new environment. We must be able to look as critically and thoughtfully at the League as we have with other organizations and systems needing updating.

Therefore, the Committee is charged with three responsibilities:

- To assess the current environment for public affairs and public problem solving at all levels in Minnesota;
- To identify the League’s unique assets, and to suggest reforms in the League’s agenda and operations, given this environment and our assets; and
- To recommend the League’s immediate agenda given this larger public affairs and policy environment.

#### I. Assess Current Public Affairs Environment

- What are the impacts of the changes in the public affairs and policy environment in Minnesota, e.g. time constraints, (lack of) shared vision, leadership culture, globalization, shared power, technology, prioritization of public activities? What is the “real state” of civic affairs and public problem solving in Minnesota?
- How do we evaluate nature of public discourse/information-sharing, and the public

- spaces available for people to resolve public problems?
- Who is having an impact in public affairs?
- What are the barriers to civic involvement?
- What are the new and emerging opportunities for citizen involvement?
- How are organizations adapting to this new environment?

## **2. Identify League's Unique Assets, and Suggest Reforms in League's Ability to Address Issues and Achieve Its Mission**

- What is the League's niche?

What are the essential values and practices that form the core of the League, and have sustained our success over 50 years?

- How can the League realize the value of these assets?
- What should be the central agenda for the League?
- What is the connection between League's mission and agenda, and programmatic activities?
- What resources (human, institutional, financial, conceptual) are needed to help implement the agenda?
- What is the relationship to other public affairs organizations?
- What are budget and staffing implications?
- How can the League dramatically increase participation in its processes? Should we?
- What are the means to implement our agenda?

## **3. Recommend Agenda**

- What are the several specific issues the League may wish to address in the immediate future?
- What is the appropriate balance in Citizens League studies between large systems issues and specific leverage points?

## Work of the Committee

### Committee Membership\*

*The Citizens League Study Committee on Doing the Common Good Better was co-chaired by Jean King and Sean Kershaw. A total of 27 individuals took an active part in the committee. The committee met 10 times between June 25, 2002 and February 5, 2003. The Citizens League Board of Directors approved the report on February 21, 2003. In addition to the chairs, the members of the committee were:*

John Adams	George Caldwell	Osman Sahardeed
Morrie Anderson	David Durenberger	Clarence Shallbetter
Dick Anfang	Michael Gorman	Lee Sheehy
Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson	K. Ilene Her	Chuck Slocum
Marcia Avner	Curt Johnson	Jack Uldrich
Jesse Bethke	Ember Reichgott Junge	Pam Wheelock
John Brandl	Dan McElroy	Michael Yang
Bernie Brommer	Christine Nelson	
Scott Burns	Kate Rubin	

*The following individuals were interviewed during the committee process:*

Karen Anderson	Nate Garvis	Joe Loveland
Duane Benson	Tom Gillespie	Marina Lyons
Tom Borrup	Roger Hale	Tim Marx
Harry Boyte	Michael Hartoonian	Peg Michels
Ronnie Brooks	Jody Hauer	Dave Nimmer
William Buzenberg	Jim Hetland	Mike O'Connor
Emmett Carson	Tom Horner	Mike Opat
Cal Clark	Kim Hunter	Deb Osgood
Chuck Clay	Roger Israel	Mitchell Pearlstein
Gary Cunningham	Phil Jenni	Anne Reber
Bob de la Vega	Verne Johnson	Itmar Santiago
Steve Dornfeld	Kenneth Keller	Christopher Thao
John Finnegan	Susan Kimberly	Kris Lyndon Wilson
Robert Fox	Tom Kingston	
George Garnett	Ted Kolderie	

**Staffing.** Lyle Wray staffed this committee with assistance from Scott McMahon. Trudy Koroschetz and Gayle Ruther provided administrative support.

**Acknowledgements:** Thanks to the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits for providing meeting space to the committee.

**Special thanks** to Steve Moore for assistance on this document

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\* Participation in this Committee should not be construed as an endorsement of every statement or recommendation within this document.

## WHAT IS THE CITIZENS LEAGUE

**The Citizens League promotes the public interest in Minnesota by involving citizens in identifying and framing critical public policy choices, forging recommendations and advocating their adoption.**

The Citizens League has been an active and effective public affairs research and education organization in the Twin Cities metropolitan area for 50 years.

Volunteer research committees of League members study policy issues in depth and develop informational reports that propose specific workable solutions to public issues. Recommendations in these reports often become law. Over the years, League reports have been a reliable source of information for governmental officials, community leaders, and citizens concerned with public policy issues of our area.

The League depends upon the support of individual members and contributions from businesses, foundations, and other organizations throughout the metropolitan area.

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## RECENT CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORTS

*These reports are the product of the League's unique program of citizen-based research. To order copies, use the form in this report. Earlier reports are available on request, call the CL office at 612-338-0791.*

Doing the Common Good Better: A Call to Citizens Action in Minnesota	3-03
Powering Up Minnesota's Energy Future: Act Now on a Long-Term Vision	1-03
A Failing Grade for School Completion: Increasing School Completion in Mpls & St. Paul	8-01
Meeting Every Child's Mental Health Needs: A Public Priority	1-01
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