

Capitol Complex Security

Update to 2009 Evaluation Report

Problems Identified

- **Security Vulnerabilities.** Minnesota's efforts to protect citizens, public officials, and employees who use the Capitol and nearby state buildings have been limited. For example, nearly all states use certified law enforcement officers for this purpose to a greater extent than Minnesota, and many states (unlike Minnesota) have some weapons screening in state buildings or courtrooms. State officials have not taken sufficient steps to ensure adequate planning for emergencies and security threats.
- **Insufficient Oversight.** Minnesota lacks an effective oversight body for ongoing review of Capitol Complex security and recommending improvements.

Changes Implemented

- **Bonding Authorized for Some Security Improvements.** The 2010 state bonding bill included \$1.25 million for "Phase 1" of Capitol Complex security upgrades. These funds will be used for changes in some parking areas, pedestrian tunnels, and camera systems.
- **Committee Recommended Security Changes.** A "Committee on Capitol Complex Security"—with members from the executive, legislative, and judicial branches—considered the OLA report and offered recommendations in an April 2011 report.
- **Some Armed Security Staff Added.** The Department of Public Safety (DPS) increased the number of retired law enforcement officers on duty in the complex during the legislative session. These officers are armed but do not have full law enforcement authority. DPS also assigned one more state trooper to the complex for the 2011 session.

Action Needed

- **Establish Ongoing Advisory Committee.** The Legislature should establish in law an ongoing body to help identify security vulnerabilities and recommend capital and operating budget priorities related to Capitol Complex security. This committee should include members from all three government branches.
- **Improve Procedures for Emergency and Threat Responses.** State officials should ensure that plans and procedures for emergencies and security threats are well documented, communicated effectively, and tested periodically.
- **Clarify State Law Regarding the Scope of State Patrol Protection.** The Legislature should amend the law to authorize the Patrol, if needed, to protect state officials besides the Governor (such as other constitutional officers, Supreme Court justices, and individual legislators). Such protection would be provided only in response to credible security threats and within the limits of the State Patrol's resources.