

Minnesota House Profile '91

Party Affiliation	
DFL	79
IR	53

Gender	
Women	29
Men	103

The Minnesota Legislature began the 77th Session with 23 new members, but the balance of power between the two major parties remains virtually unchanged from the 76th Session.

The Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party controls the House by a 79-53 margin over Independent-Republicans, with two seats still open. Before the November elections, DFLers held control by an 80-54 margin.

Likewise, the rankings of the most common professions among House members remained about the same, although the number of farmers has decreased slightly from earlier levels.

And the number of women serving in the House has reached an all-time high, with 29 members — up from 27 a year ago.

Farming, the traditional number one occupation in the House, is now tied for first as the most common occupation among members. A total of 20 members listed farming as their main job this year— down from 23 a year ago.

That's a pronounced drop from the 27 members who cited farming in 1987, but still above the all-time low for farmers in 1977, when only 18 members listed it as their occupation.

Business was also cited by 20 members as their occupation, which was in second place a year ago. That gives farmers and business 30 percent of House membership, or 15 percent each.

Farming and business were followed by educator (19) and full-time legislator (19) among occupations. The number of full-time legislators remains unchanged from a year ago, but the ranks of educators increased by two during that time.

Age	
21-30	6
31-40	23
41-50	44
51-60	26
61-70	12
71+	1
Not Available	20

The biggest change in the makeup of the House was in the number of attorneys. There are now 18 attorneys serving in the House, up from 15 in 1990.

That's a significant increase from the 12 attorneys who served in the House in 1987, but still below the 27 attorneys who served in 1963. At that time, when the Legislature met every other year, it was easier for attorneys, as it was for many other professions, to take time off to serve.

Many other occupations remained relatively stable between 1990 and 1991. Homemaker was cited by seven members, followed by trades/labor (4), real estate (3), and auctioneers (2).

Occupations that showed an increase over 1990 are consultants (5 to 7) and government workers (2 to 4).

Among other occupations cited were banker, counselor, pharmacist, engineer, certified public accountant, loan officer, securities representative, executive director for a non-profit organization, and a social issues program director.

Many of the occupations were some-

Terms		Occupation	
1st	21	Farming	20
2nd	15	Business	20
3rd	27	Educator	19
4th	12	F. T. Legislator	19
5th	16	Attorney	18
6th	9	Homemaker	7
7th	9	Consultant	7
8th	6	Trades	4
9th	5	Government	4
10th	10	Real Estate	3
11th	1	Auctioneer	2
18th	1	Other	9

what difficult to categorize, however. For example, seven additional members listed legislator as a secondary occupation and eight listed it as their primary job, while also citing a secondary occupation. But these members were not included in the count of full-time legislators.

Education	
High School	7
Some College	18
4 yr. Undergraduate Degree	45
Graduate Work	17
Graduate Degree	29
Vo-Tech	6
2 yr. Undergraduate Degree	3
No Listing	7

There have also been some shifts in the educational makeup of the House.

The number of legislators who hold some kind of college undergraduate degree has increased significantly from 31 in 1990 to 48 in 1991. However, those who have done some graduate work has declined from 27 to 17, as have those with vo-tech or some college (32 in 1990 compared to 25 in 1991). Members holding graduate degrees dropped slightly from 31 to 29.

The average age of House members is 47, with the youngest member at 26 and the oldest at 79. The largest group of legislators are the 27 who are currently serving their third term. The next largest group is the 21 who are in their first term (the two other members elected in November had previously served in the House). There are 16 fifth-term members, 15 second-term members, 12 fourth-term members, and 10 tenth-term members.

Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth) continues as Minnesota's elder statesman, serving his 18th term and will have his 80th birthday later this month.

This breakdown was based on 132 members — two short of the 134 House districts. Special elections are expected to be held next month for the seats previously held by Reps. Elton Redalen (IR-Fountain), who was named commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, and Joe Quinn (DFL-Coon Rapids), who was named a district court judge.