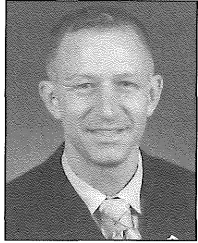


# A passion for local issues

## Reinert plans to be 'an advocate and a partner' for Duluth

By Nick Busse

When Rep. Roger Reinert (DFL-Duluth) resigned as president of the Duluth City Council at 11:59 a.m. Jan. 6, it was only so he could take his oath of office as a state representative a minute later. But Reinert's commitment to his home city hasn't ended; in fact, he said it's the whole reason he came to the Capitol.



Rep. Roger Reinert

"Knowing the city's issues intimately as a councilor and the president of the council, I knew the role that St. Paul played," Reinert said. "I thought this was a good opportunity for someone who knows the city's issues to be in St. Paul to be

an advocate and a partner."

Reinert, a college science instructor and lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserve, spent six years on the council. He has a list of things he'd like to get done for Duluth; however, he also hopes to strengthen the hand of other regional centers like Mankato, Rochester and St. Cloud. Reinert said these regional centers often provide vital services to surrounding communities that don't help pay for them. As local government aid is reduced and cities are forced to cut spending, he said an undue burden is being placed on these regional hubs.

"Somehow, regional centers need to find a way to make that more equitable, or to find more stable funding for those services, or they're not going to survive," said Reinert. He plans to organize a monthly gathering

### DISTRICT 7B

Population (2007 est.): 36,306

Largest City: Duluth

County: St. Louis

Top Concerns: Local government issues, state budget, the economy

of House members who represent regional centers to discuss common issues.

Reinert hopes he and his fellow lawmakers can address the state's budget deficit quickly enough to finish the legislative session on time, arguing that it's one of the ways in which Minnesotans judge leadership. He also said all options need to be on the table as they hammer out the budget.

"We can't tax our way out of this, nor can we cut our way out of it; there's going to be some mix of all of it by the time we're done," Reinert said.