Michelle Fischbach (MN-07) Research Report
The following report contains research on Michelle Fischbach, a Republican candidate in Minnesota’s 7th district. Research for this research book was conducted by the DCCC’s Research Department between February 2020 and May 2020. By accepting this report, you are accepting responsibility for all information and analysis included. Therefore, it is your responsibility to verify all claims against the original documentation before you make use of it. Make sure you understand the facts behind our conclusions before making any specific charges against anyone.

Republican Candidate in Minnesota’s 7th Congressional District

Research Book – 2020
May 2020

Prepared by the DCCC Research Department
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**Key Findings**

**Fischbach Was Out Of Touch With Hardworking Minnesotans**

Throughout Her Career, Fischbach Voted To Defend Corporations And Give Tax Breaks To The Rich. In 2018, Fischbach supported a bill that provided tax giveaways to multinational corporations and the wealthiest Minnesotans, without providing sufficient education funding. In 1999, she supported a $1.1 billion tax giveaway that primarily benefited the wealthiest Minnesotans. In 2003, she voted against a bill that raised taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans and balanced the budget, arguing that it was the “worst thing” for the state’s economy. In 2004, she voted against a wide-ranging tax bill that included more local funding for outstate Minnesota, bonuses for veterans, higher taxes on the wealthy, and incentives for infrastructure development. In 2006, she opposed a tax plan that would have given relief to school districts and farmers, simply because it raised taxes on corporations.

Fischbach Was Out Of Touch With Minnesota’s Farmers. In an interview conducted in September 2019, Fischbach did not know basic crop prices in Minnesota. After the interviewer asked her to state the price of soybeans, Fischbach said she did not know. When the interviewer pressed her further and asked her to simply list approximate prices, she was still unable to provide an approximate figure.


**Fischbach Was Part Of The Swamp**

Fischbach Was A Career Politician Who Was Willing To Put Her Party Ahead Of The Best Interests Of Minnesotans. Fischbach was first elected to political office in 1995, and prior to that was a pro-life activist. When Fischbach become Lt. Governor after Tina Smith was appointed to the Senate, Fischbach cost the Minnesota nearly $150,000 by attempting to keep her state Senate seat and preserve the Republican majority.

Fischbach And Her Husband Were Criticized For Potential Conflicts Of Interest And Seeming Pay To Play Politics. In 2011, Fischbach voted to protect a Republican lawmaker who was implicated in a pay-to-play scandal. Scott was the Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, an influential pro-life group in Minnesota. Michelle served on the board of the group while she was a state legislator, sparking concerns about a potential conflict of interest. Scott was also accused in engaging in pay-for-play in 2007 when he served on the board of Mississippi Right for Life, a powerful pro-life group in Mississippi. Campaign finance records showed that a gubernatorial candidate, Charlie Ross, was only endorsed by the group after he contracted with Scott’s consulting firm. A March 2007 memo from Scott to Bryant showed Scott telling Bryant he wanted to “do [his] part to ensure your victory,” but Scott later insisted there was “no quid pro quo.”

Fischbach And Her Husband Had Long-Standing Ties To Washington D.C Elite. In 1997, when she was a low-profile state senator, Fischbach held a fundraiser in Washington that was hosted by high profile Republicans, including Bob Dole, Bill Brock, Rod Grams, and Vin Weber. Fischbach’s 2020 Congressional campaign has received tens of thousands from Washington Republican leadership, including Minority Leader McCarthy.

**Fischbach Was Bad For Education**

Fischbach Was An Obstacle To College Affordability. In 2013, as chair of the Senate Education committee, Fischbach opposed tuition relief funding for the University of Minnesota, even though officials from the university system had requested funding that specifically included tuition relief. In 2013, Fischbach voted against a higher education funding package that sought to lower tuition costs.
Fischbach Was Bad For Public Education. In 2000, Fischbach supported eliminating K-12 performance requirements in Minnesota. In 2003, Fischbach called for cuts to funding that went towards the arts and facility improvement in Minnesota.

Fischbach Was Bad For Teachers. In 2011, Fischbach advocated for and voted for sweeping education cuts that limited teachers’ bargaining rights, froze special education funding, and eliminated funding for racial integration. In 2005, Fischbach supported performance-based pay for teachers in Minnesota.
Thematics
Fischbach Was Out Of Touch With Hardworking Minnesotans

Significant Findings

✓ In 1999, Fischbach voted against a $1.1 billion sales tax rebate package that primarily benefited middle- and lower-income Minnesotans.

✓ In 1999, Fischbach voted against legislation exempting local governments from having to pay state sales taxes.

✓ In 1999, Fischbach introduced legislation trying to exempt clothing alterations from state sales taxes, which would have cost the state $1.3 million annually.

✓ In 2001, Fischbach voted for a tax overhaul package that cut $840 million from the state’s revenues.

✓ In 2003, Fischbach voted against a tax package that raised taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans, while also balancing the state’s budget. She argued that it would be the “worst thing” for the economy.

✓ In 2004, Fischbach voted against a wide-ranging tax bill that included more local aid for outstate Minnesota cities, incentives for infrastructure development, and higher taxes on the wealthy. Fischbach said she was “very tempted” to support the bill due to its funding for outstate Minnesota, but nevertheless voted against the bill.

✓ In 2006, Fischbach voted against a tax package that would have provided aid to school districts, given relief to farmers, and increased local aid, simply because it raised taxes on corporations.

✓ In 2013, Fischbach opposed Gov. Mark Dayton’s proposed tax overhaul that rewrote the state’s sales tax code and raised taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans.

✓ Fischbach was out of touch with Minnesota’s farmers. In an interview conducted in September 2019, Fischbach did not know basic crop prices in Minnesota. After the interviewer asked her to state the price of soybeans, Fischbach said she did not know. When the interviewer pressed her further and asked her to simply list approximate prices, she was still unable to provide an approximate figure.

✓ Fischbach consistently voted against minimum wage increases in Minnesota. In 2004, 2005, and 2013, she voted against raising the minimum wage.

Throughout Her Career, Fischbach Voted To Defend Corporations And Give Tax Breaks To The Rich

Fischbach Supported A Bill That Provided Tax Giveaways To Multinational Corporations And The Wealthiest Minnesotans While Not Providing Enough Money For Emergency School Aid

Fischbach Supported HF 4385, A Republican Tax Bill. According to the Minnesota State Senate journal, Fischbach supported HF 4385. [Minnesota State Senate, Journal, 5/16/18]

Gov. Dayton Vetoed HF 4385 Because It Would Have Protected Multinational Corporations. “Joined by students and teachers at Bruce Vento Elementary School, Governor Mark Dayton today vetoed the Republican
Tax Bill (H.F. 4385/S.F. 3982), making clear that he will not sign a Tax Bill until the Minnesota Legislature passes Emergency School Aid that would help schools avoid layoffs and program cuts. The Republican Tax Bill vetoed by Governor Dayton would have spent $136 million in the first year alone, and protected multinational corporations from paying nearly $200 million in state taxes on profits they have sheltered overseas. Corporate tax benefits and protections in the legislation would have unsustainably grown to more than $280 million in this biennium and $482 million in the next biennium.” [Office of Mark Dayton, 5/17/18]

Gov. Dayton Said The Bill Provided “Tax Giveaways To Multinational Corporations And The Wealthiest Minnesotans” While Not Providing Enough Money For Emergency School Aid. “Meanwhile, despite the State’s $329 million budget surplus, and hundreds of millions of dollars in tax giveaways to multinational corporations and the wealthiest Minnesotans, Republican Legislative Leaders have said there is not enough money to provide one-time Emergency School Aid for schoolchildren across Minnesota. In the final days of the 2018 Legislative Session, Governor Dayton is strongly urging Republican lawmakers to reconsider.” [Office of Mark Dayton, 5/17/18]

1999: Fischbach Voted Against A $1.1 Billion Sales Tax Rebate That Primarily Benefited Middle-And Lower-Income Minnesotan Families

1999: The Minnesota State Senate Passed A $1.1 Billion Sales Tax Rebate Plan. “The state Senate on Monday approved Gov. Jesse Ventura’s $1.1 billion sales-tax rebate proposal, setting the stage for what probably will be contentious negotiations with the House over the type of rebate Minnesotans ultimately will get. The sales-tax rebate, which favors middle- and lower-income taxpayers, passed on a 44-21, nearly party-line vote in the DFL-controlled Senate. The vote came days after the GOP-controlled House passed a $1.1 billion income-tax rebate that gives the largest rebates to the wealthiest Minnesotans.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]

The Plan Called For The Distribution Of Rebate Checks Based On The Amount Of Sales Tax Paid By Various Tax Brackets. “Under the plan passed Monday, more than 2 million Minnesotans would get rebate checks late this summer based on state data that would estimate the amount of sales taxes paid by filers in various income brackets. That’s different from the House plan, which would rebate the first $150 of state income taxes from 1997 plus 20 percent of the remainder. In that scenario, a married couple with an adjusted gross income between $30,000 and $40,000 would get $406.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]

Compared To A Dueling Republican Plan, The Sales Tax Rebate Was Targeted Towards Households Making Less Than $130,000. “Under the Senate plan, the same couple could expect a little under $700. State research shows that equals about 30 percent of what a couple in that bracket would have paid in sales taxes over two years. Both plans would issue checks automatically. The Senate plan differs slightly from Ventura’s original proposal, which would have limited sales-tax rebates to property owners and renters who qualified for the 1997 property-tax rebate. The Senate plan would offer flat $50 rebates to people who weren’t eligible for that property-tax rebate. Johnson, the Senate bill’s chief sponsor, said single taxpayers making less than $65,000 and married taxpayers making less than $130,000 would do better under the sales-tax plan than under the income-tax plan.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]

Fischbach Voted Against The Plan. “How they voted The 44-21 roll call by which the Minnesota Senate voted to pass a $1.1 billion sales-tax rebate. A ‘yes’ vote was to pass the bill and a ‘no’ vote was against it.” […] Republicans Against (22) Dick Day, Owatonna; Steve Dille, Dassel; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville; Dennis Frederickson, New Ulm; Sheila Kiscaden, Rochester; Dave Kleis, St. Cloud; David Knutson, Burnsville; Gary Laidig, Stillwater; Cal Larson, Fergus Falls; Arlene Lesewski, Marshall; Warren Limmer, Maple Grove; Thomas Neuville, Northfield; Edward Oliver, Deephaven; Gen Olson, Minnetrista; Mark Ourada, Buffalo; Pat Pariseau, Farmington; Martha Robertson, Minnetonka; Claire Robling, Prior Lake; Linda Runbeck, Circle Pines; Kenric Scheevel, Preston; Dan Stevens, Mora.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>2003:</td>
<td>Minnesota’s Tax Overhaul Law Had $1.3 Billion In Tax Increases To Balance The Budget, Including Higher Taxes On Minnesota Families Making Over $252,000 Per Year, Cigarette Purchases, And Property Taxes For Businesses. “Minnesota’s highest wage earners, smokers and businesses would pay higher taxes under a bill passed Tuesday by the state Senate. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, passed 35-31. It includes about $1.3 billion in tax increases to balance the state’s $4.2 billion deficit and a controversial two-year freeze on local property taxes. […] The Senate bill would: Raise the tax on cigarettes by $1 per pack to $1.48. Create a new top income tax bracket of 9.4 percent for single Minnesotans earning $136,000 or more a year or families earning at least $252,000 a year. The current top bracket is 7.85 percent. Increase the statewide property tax on businesses. Prevent cities, counties and school districts from increasing their property tax levies for two years, with some exceptions.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/14/03]</td>
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<td>2004:</td>
<td>The Minnesota Senate Passed A Wide-Ranging Tax Overhaul Bill By A Wide-Ranging 38-28 Vote, Which Included Bonuses For Veterans Of The War On Terror. “The Senate passed a tax bill Thursday that includes more state aid for cities in outstate Minnesota and will prolong the St. Cloud area’s local sales tax if voters approve. The wide-ranging bill also would give bonuses to veterans of the war on terrorism through an income-tax checkoff, a proposal pushed by Sen. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud. However, Kleis and Central Minnesota’s other Republican legislators voted against the bill, saying it raises taxes on businesses. The bill passed the DFL-controlled Senate 38-28.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]</td>
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<td>2004:</td>
<td>The Bill Included $60 Million In Aid For Cities In Outstate Minnesota, And Authorized St. Cloud To Extend Its Half-Cent Sales Tax. “The bill puts an additional $60 million into local government aid to outstate cities to make up for $150 million in LGA cuts last year. That would mean more money next year for most Central Minnesota cities, including more than $1 million for St. Cloud, $623,000 for Sartell, $300,000 for Sauk Rapids and $174,700 for Waite Park. The bill would allow St. Cloud and surrounding cities to continue charging a half-cent sales tax beyond its 2005 expiration date. Proceeds would help pay for the expansion of the St. Cloud Civic Center, a new public library and other area projects. St. Cloud also could raise its tax on food and beverages from 1 percent to 2 percent and its lodging tax from 5 percent to 6 percent of gross receipts. All three measures would require voter approval.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]</td>
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The Bill Incentivized Infrastructure Development In Minnesota

The Bill Extended A Half-Cent Sales Tax Directed Towards Road Improvements And Provided Tax Exemptions For Rapid Transit Development. “The bill also would: -Allow Waite Park to charge the half-cent sales tax through 2005 for projects voters approved last November, including several road improvements. [...] Provides tax exemptions for the development of personal rapid transit, which involves computer-controlled vehicles that run on an elevated track.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

The Bill Raised Taxes On The Wealthiest Minnesotans

The Bill Raised Minnesota’s Top Income Tax Rate From 7.85 Percent To 8 Percent. “The bill also would: [...] Increases the top income tax rate from 7.85 percent to 8 percent to pay for changes in the alternative minimum tax, which some legislators have complained is unfairly hitting the middle class.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

Supporters Of The Bill Argued That It Would Spur Job Creation In Minnesota

Supporters Of The Bill Argued That It Would Spur Job Creation In Minnesota. “The bill’s author, Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, argued that the bill will help hold down property taxes and encourage job growth. But Republicans argued that the tax increases will hurt businesses. ‘A vote for this bill is a vote against job creation in Minnesota,’ Kleis said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

Fischbach Said She Was “Very Tempted” To Support The Bill Due To Its Funding For Cities In Outstate Minnesota, But Still Voted Against The Bill

Fischbach Said She Was “Very Tempted” To Support The Bill Due To Its Funding For Cities In Outstate Minnesota, But Still Voted Against The Bill. “The additional LGA made it ‘very tempting’ to vote for the bill, said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. But she said too much of the money went to Minneapolis and St. Paul instead of outstate Minnesota where it’s needed more. Kleis’ amendment to create the voluntary veterans’ bonus checkoff passed handily on a 59-6 vote. The checkoff is modeled after an existing one that funds nongame wildlife habitat. [...] Four area Republicans voted no on the Senate tax bill: Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Paul Koering of Fort Ripley and Betsy Wergin of Princeton.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “How they voted The Minnesota Senate voted 35-28 Friday to approve SF2206, a bill that raises $800 million for state spending by adding a new, top-tier state income tax bracket. A ‘yes’ vote was a vote to approve the tax bill. Sen. Dean Johnson, DFL-Willmar: yes. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: no.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/05]

2005: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Taxes On The Wealthiest Minnesotans

2005: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Tax Bill That Raised The Income Tax-Rate For Minnesota’s Highest Earners To 7.85 Percent And Created A New 10.65 Rate For Couples Making Over $250,000. “About 45,000 Minnesotans would pay higher income taxes to balance the books on $800 million in new education and health-care spending and property tax relief, in a tax bill the state Senate narrowly approved Friday. Senate members voted 35-28 to approve the DFL-sponsored tax bill, which creates a new high-end income tax bracket for at least four years to pay for spending programs the Senate has already approved. The income-tax rate for the highest earners now is 7.85 percent. The Senate proposal creates a 10.65 rate that would apply to married couples with incomes of $250,000 or more a year or singles earning more than $166,000. The new rate would be the highest in the nation, said Sen. Bill Belanger, R-Bloomington, the senior Republican on the tax committee.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/05]
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Fischbach Opposed A Tax Plan That Would Have Provided Relief To School Districts, Given Aid To Farmers, And Provided Aid To Counties And Cities, Simply Because It Raised Taxes On Corporations</td>
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**2006: Senate DFLers Introduced A Tax Bill That Helped Farmers, Cities And Counties, And School Districts, Provided Property Tax Relief, And Provided Tax Credits For Farmers And Veterans**

“Two Central Minnesota Senate Democrats helped defeat a bill from their own party Wednesday that would have raised taxes on businesses to pay for more aid to school districts, cities and counties. On a vote of 32-35, the Senate rejected SF 3131, a supplemental tax bill that proponents said would deliver property tax relief to homeowners but that opponents warned would harm the state’s economic recovery.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

**The Bill Would Have Generated $160 Million In Revenue By Raising The State’s Deed Tax And Raising Taxes On Corporations That Operated Overseas.** “The tax bill written by Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, would have raised $160 million next year by taxing foreign operating corporations and another $44 million by lifting a cap on commercial and industrial property tax rates. Pogemiller dropped a proposed income tax increase for the top earners in the state before Wednesday’s debate and a proposed deed tax increase during the discussion. Businesses have received more than their fair share of tax breaks since a 2001 tax policy shift, he said. ‘The facts are, homeowners’ property taxes have gone up 40 percent since 2001, while commercial and industrial property taxes have gone up 5.3 percent,’ he said. A loophole that allows corporations to avoid taxation by basing themselves overseas means ‘higher taxes for every other business in Minnesota and every other consumer, because that’s lost revenue,’ he said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

**The Bill Would Have Relieved Property Tax Levies, While Simultaneously Giving School Districts An Extra $60 Million.** “The increases would have given school districts an extra $60 million beginning in 2008 to replace local property tax levy dollars.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

**The Bill Would Have Authorized A Total Of $138 Million In Aid To Cities And Counties To Offset Federal Cuts And Provided $17 Million In Tax Credits For Farmers And Veterans.** “It also would have meant an extra $60 million in one-time aid to counties to offset federal funding cuts, $78 million in one-time additional aid to cities and another $16 million in restored tax credit reimbursements to cities. Also contained in the bill were $17 million worth of tax credits for beginning farmers’ financial training, for dairy farmers’ equipment investments, for military combat service and other areas.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

**Fischbach Opposed The Bill Because It Raised Taxes On Corporations**

Fischbach Opposed The Bill, Complaining That It Raised Taxes On Corporations, Which She Alleged Would consequently Lead To Unemployment. “An amendment from Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, that would have given the Rocori school district levy authority to lease its administrative offices got into the bill, though Fischbach voted against its final passage. ‘It increased taxes, particularly the (commercial and industrial) tax on businesses,’ she said. ‘We want to keep our people employed.’ Next stop Clark and Fischbach agreed that DFL leadership might attempt to pass a stripped-down version of the tax bill before the session ends.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

**2007: Fischbach Supported Allowing A Ballot Amendment To Decide If Minnesota Should Raise Its Sales Tax To Boost Funding For Cultural And Environmental Funding**

“Legislation was introduced to allow a ballot amendment that would let voters decide whether or not to raise the state’s sales tax by 3/8th of a percentage point”
2007: Legislation Was Introduced To Allow A Ballot Amendment That Would Let Voters Decide Whether Or Not To Raise The State’s Sales Tax By 3/8th Of A Percentage Point. “Wearing buttons in support of the arts and the outdoors, Leslie Schumacher was smiling from ear to ear Thursday on the floor of the House of Representatives. The former state representative was there to lobby her former colleagues to support a bill asking voters to increase the state’s sales tax. The proceeds would be dedicated to environmental and cultural improvements. ‘This is a critical issue. Tourism is the No. 1 industry in Minnesota,’ the Central Minnesota Arts Board executive director said. ‘If we don’t see more of an investment in the state, we’re going to see the tourism industry fail.’ After 10 years of debating it, lawmakers decided Thursday to put the question to voters by overwhelmingly approving a constitutional amendment that would increase the sales tax by 3/8ths of a percentage point if a majority of the state’s voters approve it in November.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

The Sales Tax Increase Would Have Gone Towards Environmental And Cultural Funding, Which Supporters Said Would Have Bolstered Minnesota’s Tourism Industry

The Sales Tax Increase Was Projected To Generate $276 Million Per Year, Which Would Have Gone Towards Wildlife, Clean Water, And Cultural Heritage Funding. “The sales tax increase would take effect July 1, 2009. It is expected to raise an estimated $276 million a year until it expires 25 years later. One-third of the revenue would go to fish, game and wildlife habitat, while another third would go to clean water. Arts and cultural heritage projects would receive 19.75 percent of the revenue, with a statewide parks and trails fund receiving the remaining 14.25 percent of the pie.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

Supporters Said This Funding Would Have Strengthened Minnesota’s Tourism Industry, And That The Tourism Sector Was At Risk Of Failing Without More Investment. “‘This is a critical issue. Tourism is the No. 1 industry in Minnesota,’ the Central Minnesota Arts Board executive director said. ‘If we don’t see more of an investment in the state, we’re going to see the tourism industry fail.’” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

Fischbach Voted In Favor Of Allowing The Potential Sales Tax Increase To Appear On The Ballot As An Amendment

Fischbach Voted In Favor Of Allowing The Potential Sales Tax Increase To Appear On The Ballot As An Amendment. “Voting Yes […] Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]


2013: Gov. Dayton Proposed An Overhaul Of The Tax Code That Rewrote The State’s Sales-Tax Code And Raised Taxes In A Number Of Areas

2013: Dayton’s Tax Plan Raised Taxes On Cigarettes And Tobacco And Lowered The Sales Tax Rate While Simultaneously Expanding The Number Of Goods Subject To Sales Taxes. “Dayton released his two-year state budget proposal Tuesday, an opening volley in the budget deliberations set to ramp up in coming months. While Dayton’s budget would create new state programs and set spending levels for all of state government, its tax overhaul drew the most initial interest. Dayton’s plan would raise income taxes on the wealthy, boost cigarette and tobacco taxes, and broaden the number of goods and services subject to the state sales tax while reducing the sales tax rate. Dayton’s plan would cut taxes in some areas, including by reducing the state’s corporate tax rate, freezing property taxes for businesses and giving homeowners a property-tax rebate of as much as $500.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/13]

The Proposal Would Have Lowered Minnesota’s Sales-Tax Rate From 6.875 Percent To 5.5 Percent. “The proposal would drop the state sales-tax rate from 6.875 percent to 5.5 percent while dramatically expanding the number of goods and services subject to the tax. One example is clothing purchases, now exempt
from Minnesota sales tax, which would be taxed under Dayton’s plan on items of $100 or more.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/13]

The Plan Raised Taxes On The Wealthiest Minnesotans By Proposing A $1.1 Billion Income-Tax Increase On Individuals making Over $150,000 And Couples Making Over $250,000. “But Pederson knocked Dayton for proposing a $1.1 billion income-tax increase on individuals making more than $150,000 and couples making more than $250,000.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/13]

Fischbach Opposed The Plan Due To Its Sales-Tax Overhaul, Even Though The Plan Actually Lowered The State’s Sales Tax Rate

Fischbach Opposed The Plan Due To Its Sales-Tax Overhaul, Arguing That Expanding The Number Of Goods Subject To Sales-Taxes Would Hurt Middle Class Families. “Fischbach and O’Driscoll were especially critical of Dayton’s sales-tax plan. The proposal would drop the state sales-tax rate from 6.875 percent to 5.5 percent while dramatically expanding the number of goods and services subject to the tax. One example is clothing purchases, now exempt from Minnesota sales tax, which would be taxed under Dayton’s plan on items of $100 or more. The sales-tax proposal would generate about $2 billion in new revenue in the next two years, most of it from extending the sales tax to so-called business-to-business services. By extending the sales tax to more goods and services, ‘that’s going to affect the middle class families that he’s trying to keep from having increased taxes,’ Fischbach said.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/13]

The Proposal Would Have Lowered Minnesota’s Sales-Tax Rate From 6.875 Percent To 5.5 Percent. “The proposal would drop the state sales-tax rate from 6.875 percent to 5.5 percent while dramatically expanding the number of goods and services subject to the tax. One example is clothing purchases, now exempt from Minnesota sales tax, which would be taxed under Dayton’s plan on items of $100 or more.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/13]

Fischbach Was Out Of Touch With Farmers

2019: Fischbach Did Not Know Basic Crop Prices In Minnesota

2019: During An Interview, Fischbach Failed To Give Even A Rough Estimate Of Soybean Prices In Minnesota. “Fischbach Doesn’t Know Basic Crop Prices When Michelle Fischbach was asked about the price of a bushel of soybeans in an interview on KFGO (7:00 into the interview), her response revealed just how little she knows about farming in Minnesota. Host: ... For example, okay, what is a bushel of soybeans worth right now, roughly? Fischbach: I didn’t look this morning, I’m sorry. Host: Well just give me a roundabout figure. Fischbach: I, you know what, I, I’m sorry, I can’t do that right now. As the host points out during their interview, questions about the general price of Minnesota’s top agricultural exports are not ‘gotcha questions,’ they are questions anyone hoping to represent an agriculture-heavy district should be able to answer.” [Minnesota DFL, Press Release, 9/6/19]

Fischbach Consistently Voted Against Increasing Minnesota’s Minimum Wage

2013: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Minnesota’s Minimum Wage To $7.75 Per Hour

2013: The Senate Passed A Bill To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 Per Hour To $7.75 Per Hour By August 2015. “Competing minimum wage bills are splitting Minnesota Democrats on an issue they consider a priority this legislative session. The Minnesota Senate on Wednesday approved a bill to bring the wage floor up to $7.75 per hour by August 2015. That’s a step up from the $6.15 in place now, a rate that is below the federal standard.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/9/13]

### 2005: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 To $6.15 An Hour

2005: The Senate Overwhelmingly Passed A Bill To Raise The State’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 To $6.15 An Hour, And Gov. Pawlenty Indicated He Would Sign The Bill Into Law. “Minimum-wage earners can expect a raise this summer. Senate members on Tuesday quickly agreed with a House of Representatives vote the day before to bump the state’s bottom wage up $1 an hour. The 42-22 vote sends Minnesota’s first minimum-wage increase since 1997 to the desk of Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who has indicated he will sign it. Senate members agreed to increase the minimum wage for most workers from $5.15 to $6.15 an hour.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/9/13]

Fischbach Still Voted Against The Bill, Even Though The Bill Passed 41-22 And Eight Republicans Voted For It. “It was a reasonable increase,’ said Sen. Paul Koering, R-Ft. Ripley, one of eight Republicans who joined DFLers to support the increase. ‘It’s not out of line to have an increase once in a while.’ […] Voting no: Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/4/05]

### 2005: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Minnesota’s Minimum Wage To $7 An Hour

2005: The Senate Passed A Bill To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 To $6.10 An Hour, And Eventually To $7 An Hour. “Workers at the bottom of the pay scale could earn $15 more a day if an increase to the state’s minimum wage, approved Thursday by the Senate, becomes law. Thursday’s 37-28 vote to increase the hourly rate this July from $5.15 an hour to $6.10 and to $7 in 2006 is the second time in two years the Democrat-led Senate has approved such a raise.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/4/05]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “The Senate voted 37-28 Thursday to increase the state’s minimum wage from $5.15 per hour to $7 per hour. A ‘yes’ vote was a vote to increase the minimum wage. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: No. Sen. Dave Kleis,” [St. Cloud Times, 2/4/05]


2004: The Minnesota State Senate Voted To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage, With An Exemption For Small Businesses Making Under $500,000 Per Year

April 2004: The State Senate Voted To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 An Hour, To $5.90 In July, And Then To $6.65 An Hour A Year Later. “The state Senate voted Tuesday to raise the minimum wage $1.50 an hour by July 2005. The bill would boost the minimum wage from $5.15 an hour to $5.90 an hour in July, then to $6.65 an hour a year later. The measure passed the Senate 36-30, but it isn’t expected to survive the legislative session because the Republican-controlled House has not considered it.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]

The Bill Allowed An Exemption For Small Businesses Making Under $500,000 Per Year. “The bill includes an exemption for small businesses earning less than $500,000 a year. Those businesses could pay employees 25 cents less than the minimum wage this year and another 25 cents less in 2005. It also allows a lower wage for workers younger than 20 during the first 90 days of their employment.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]

Minnesota Had Not Raised Its Minimum Wage Since 1997, And Would Have Had A Minimum Wage Close To $8.50 Per Hour If Wages Had Kept Up With Inflation
Minnesota Had Not Raised Its Minimum Wage Since 1997 And Would Have Had A Minimum Wage Close To $8.50 Per Hour If Wages Had Kept Up With Inflation. “The bill’s author, Sen. Ellen Anderson, noted that the state last raised the minimum wage in 1997. If it had kept pace with inflation, the minimum would be close to $8.50 by now, she said. ‘Every year, it’s worth less to those people who get up and go to work and make five dollars and 15 cents an hour,’ said Anderson, DFL-St. Paul. ‘Every year, it means less money in their pockets and less earning power.’” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill

**Fischbach Voted Against The Bill.** “How they voted […] No: Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]
**Fischbach Was Part Of The Swamp**

**Significant Findings**

- Fischbach was a career politician who was willing to put her party ahead of the best interests of Minnesotans.
- Fischbach was first elected to political office in 1995, and prior to that was a pro-life activist.
- When Fischbach became Lt. Governor after Tina Smith was appointed to the Senate, Fischbach cost the Minnesota nearly $150,000 by attempting to keep her state Senate seat and preserve the Republican majority.
- Fischbach and her husband were criticized for potential conflicts of interest and seeming pay to play politics.
- In 2011, Fischbach voted to protect a Republican lawmaker who was implicated in a pay-to-play scandal.
- Scott was the Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, a pro-life group in Minnesota. Michelle served on the board of the group while she was a state legislator, sparking concerns about conflicts of interest.
- In 2007, Scott was accused of engaging in pay-for-play when Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life was issuing endorsements.
- Scott Fischbach ran a consulting firm while serving on the board of Mississippi Right To Life, a powerful pro-life group that endorsed Charlie Ross over Phil Bryant in Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor Election.
- Campaign finance records showed that Ross only got the endorsement after paying thousands of dollars to Scott’s consulting firm, raising questions about a possible quid pro quo.
- A March 2007 memo from Scott Fischbach to Bryant showed Fischbach telling Bryant he wanted to “do [his] part to ensure your victory,” but Fischbach insisted there was “no quid pro quo.”
- Fischbach and her husband had long-standing ties to Washington D.C. elite.
- In 1997, when she was a low-profile state senator, Fischbach held a fundraiser in Washington that was hosted by high profile Republicans, including Bob Dole, Bill Brock, Rod Grams, and Vin Weber.
- Fischbach’s 2020 Congressional campaign has received tens of thousands from Washington Republican leadership, including Minority Leader McCarthy.
2017: Fischbach Cost Minnesota Nearly $150,000 In Legal Fees Because She Wanted To Serve As Both The Lt. Governor And In The State Senate

2017: Despite Ascending To The Role Of Lieutenant Governor, Fischbach Tried To Hold Onto her Senate Seat Because Senate Republicans Held A One Vote Majority In The Legislature

As State Senate President, Fischbach Became Lieutenant Governor When Lt. Gov. Tina Smith Resigned To Join Accept A Senate Appointment After Sen. Franken Resigned. “Here’s how Fischbach, 52, an eight-term lawmaker from Paynesville, landed in her predicament: Democrat Al Franken, accused of sexual misconduct, resigned from the U.S. Senate on Jan. 2. Dayton appointed DFL Lt. Gov. Tina Smith to replace him. Smith resigned from her state office. Under the Minnesota Constitution, the president of the Senate — Fischbach — automatically became lieutenant governor.” [Twin Cities Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

Despite Ascending To The Role Of Lieutenant Governor, Fischbach Tried To Hold Onto Her Senate Seat Because Senate Republicans Held A One Vote Majority In The Legislature. “That automatic ascension of Fischbach created awkwardness, not only because she and Dayton are of opposite parties, but also because Republicans clung to a one-vote majority in the Senate. As such, Fischbach refused to take the oath as lieutenant governor, referring to herself only as ‘acting lieutenant governor. She also refused to resign her Senate seat, a maneuver that drew a pair of lawsuits from Democrats who alleged that was a violation of the state Constitution.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 5/31/18]

Fischbach Became Lt. Governor After Al Franken’s Resignation And Refused To Give Up Her Senate Seat, Because At The Time, Her Removal Could Have Cost Republicans Control

Fischbach Became Lt. Governor After Al Franken’s Resignation And Refused To Give Up Her Senate Seat. “Democrat Al Franken, accused of sexual misconduct, resigned from the U.S. Senate on Jan. 2. Dayton appointed DFL Lt. Gov. Tina Smith to replace him. Smith resigned from her state office. […] Under the Minnesota Constitution, the president of the Senate, Fischbach automatically became lieutenant governor. She opts to retain her Senate seat, despite a constitutional provision barring legislators from holding other state offices” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

At The Time, If Fischbach Was Removed From Her Senate Seat Republicans Could Have Lost Control Of Their Slim Majority. “Republicans currently hold a 34-32 Senate majority with one vacant seat. If Fischbach is removed from her seat, the GOP could lose control of the chamber.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

A Lawsuit Was Filed Alleging That Fischbach Was In Violation Of The Constitution By Holding Multiple Posts, And Should Be Barred From Exercising Her Senate Power

A Lawsuit Was Filed Alleging That Fischbach Was In Violation Of The Constitution By Holding Multiple Posts And Should Be Barred From Exercising Her Senate Power. “But a past state Supreme Court ruling allows her to occupy both posts, she and Senate Republicans counter. A DFL voter filed a lawsuit asserting Fischbach is violating the state constitution and should be barred from exercising her Senate powers. Her fate is in the courts hands” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

The First Lawsuit Against Fischbach Was Dismissed Because The Legislative Session Had Not Started And Thereby Fischbach Had Not Assumed Two Roles Yet. “An initial lawsuit filed by Democratic constituent Destiny Dusosky was dismissed earlier this year, in large part because it was filed before the Legislature resumed its session - and thus before Fischbach had carried out both roles. Dusosky followed up with a second challenge in April. That case was awaiting a hearing scheduled for June 5.” [Canadian Press, 5/25/18]

Fischbach’s Court Battle Cost Minnesota Tax Payers Nearly $150,000

Fischbach’s Court Battle Cost Minnesota Tax Payers Nearly $150,000. “Minnesota taxpayers will pick up the tab for nearly $150,000 in legal fees in a court fight over the lieutenant governor’s seat.” [CBS Minnesota, 12/11/18]

A Majority Of Minnesotans Disagreed With Fischbach’s Decision To Hold Two Posts Simultaneously

2018: 75.5% Of Minnesotans Said Fischbach Should Not Be Able To Serve In The Minnesota Senate While Simultaneously Being Lieutenant Governor. “Should Michelle Fischbach be able to serve in the Minnesota Senate while being Minnesota lieutenant governor? 19.7% Yes 75.5% No 4.8% I don’t know” [Hutchinson Leader, 1/3/18]

1997: Fischbach Was Long Speculated To Be A Potential Candidate For Higher Office In Minnesota

1997: Fischbach Was Rumored To Be A Potential Running Mate For Gubernatorial Candidate Prospective Gubernatorial Candidate Norm Coleman, And Said She Was “Flattered” To Get The Attention. “In the glow of a glorious election-year spring, the thoughts of politically fixated Minnesotans turn to a quadrennial conundrum: Who will be the state's next lieutenant governor? […] St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman is said to have considered a number of candidates, including state Rep. Tim Pawlenty, R-Eagan, who was a gubernatorial candidate until Coleman got in the race; state Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who has strong ties to the anti-abortion movement; and Rep. Carol Molnau, R-Chaska, an assistant minority leader of the House. Coleman’s staff would not comment on the matter except to say the mayor likely will make his choice around the time of the Republican state convention on June 18. Pawlenty could not be reached for comment. Molnau said she has talked to Coleman about the job. ‘I’m interested, but it’s something my family and I will be deciding this weekend,’ Molnau said. Fischbach, who has only been in the Senate since 1995, said, ‘I’m flattered that anyone’s even talking about it.’” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/31/98]

1996: Fischbach Was Elected To The Minnesota State Senate

1996: Fischbach Was Elected To The Minnesota State Senate After Her Predecessor Resigned Over A Shoplifting Scandal. “Republican Michelle Fischbach won Tuesday’s election to replace former Sen. Joe Bertram, the Paynesville DFLer who resigned after a shoplifting arrest and allegations of bribery. According to unofficial results, the Paynesville City Council member and novelty-store owner beat DFLer Lynn Schurman, a Rocori school board member and bakery owner, 5,800 to 5,457. ‘I’m pretty excited, and I think that our message of a strong conservative voice … was what the people wanted,’ Fischbach said late Tuesday. Fischbach said she planned to be at the Capitol today.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 2/7/96]

1995: Fischbach Became The First Woman Elected To The Paynesville City Council

1995: Fischbach Became The First Woman Elected To The Paynesville City Council. “The couple quickly dove into local and state politics. In 1995, Michelle Fischbach was the first woman elected to the Paynesville City Council.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

Prior To Running For Office, Fischbach Was A Pro-Life Influencer In Republican Circles
Michelle Fischbach (MN-07) Research Book | 18

Fischbach Was Executive Director Of The National Republican Pro-Life Committee. “‘I don’t know if it will even reach the floor,’ predicts Michelle Fischbach, executive director of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee. ‘The grass roots of the Republican party are pro-life. It’s necessary for pro-lifers to have that language.’” [Oregonian, 11/20/91]

1991: Fischbach Worried That Republicans Would Leave The Party If The Party “Desert[ed] The Pro-Lifers.” “Republican abortion-rights supporters are preparing a new attack on their party’s position against abortion. ‘We’ve been civil and silent, and while we may remain civil, we ain’t going to be silent anymore,’ says Ann Stone, head of Republicans for Choice. ‘You may see people leaving the party if Republicans desert the pro-lifers,’ says Michelle Fischbach of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee.” [USA Today, 9/27/91]

Fischbach And Her Husband Were Criticized For Potential Conflicts Of Interest And Seeming Pay To Play Politics

2011: Fischbach Voted To Protect A Republican Lawmaker Who Was Implicated In A Pay-To-Play Scandal

2011: GOP Sen. Scott Newman’s Office Refused To Meet With A Group Who Supported His Opponent In The Previous Campaign Cycle, Which Led DFLers To Call For An Investigation Into The Matter

2011: Newman’s Legislative Aide Sent An Email Indicating That The Senator Would Not Meet With A Group That Supported Newman’s Opponent In The Previous Campaign Cycle. “At issue was an email sent out by Newman’s legislative aid last month. ‘Unfortunately, Senator Newman will not see any organizations that donated to/supported his opponent Hal Kimball,’ the email read. ‘After some careful checking, I discovered that the MNA had donated to Kimball’s campaign.’” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/10/11]

Senate DFLers Called For An Investigation Into Newman And His Aide, Pointing Out That His Office Violated A Senate Rule Prohibiting Senators From Limiting Access To Political Contributors. “Senate DFLers are seeking an ethics investigation on Republican Sen. Scott Newman of Hutchinson whose legislative assistant sent an email to the Minnesota Nurses Association stating that he would not meet with groups who backed his opponent, Hal Kimball. The DFLers claim that Newman violated Senate Rule 56.3, which prohibits senators from limiting access only to those who have made political contributions. […] Pappas and the DFL sent a letter to Senate President Michelle Fischbach on Thursday requesting an investigation.” [Minnesota Independent, 1/27/11]

As A Member Of The Ethics Committee, Fischbach Voted Against Opening An Investigation Into Newman

Upon Receiving The Complaint That DFLers Filed Against Newman, Fischbach Voted Against Opening An Investigation. “The senate ethics panel voted to dismiss the complaint in a closed-door session following the public hearing. The participants: DFL Sens. Linda Scheid (Brooklyn Park) and Kathy Sheran (Mankato), GOP Sens. Michelle Fischbach (Paynesville) and Bill Ingebrigtsen (Alexandria). After the hearing, Newman expressed relief that the panel had dismissed the matter. ‘At this point, to be real honest, I need to get back to work,’ he said.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/10/11]

Despite Promising That The Closed-Door Session To Vote On The Newman Investigation Would Be Recorded, But The Tape That Was Supposed To Contain The Audio Recording Was Blank

Despite Promising That The Closed-Door Session To Vote On The Newman Investigation Would Be Recorded, But The Tape That Was Supposed To Contain The Audio Recording Was Blank. “Senate President Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, assured reporters and members of the public before the panel went behind closed doors to decide on the complaint, that the session would be recorded. Those deliberations led to the charge against Newman being dismissed and no investigation. The four-member bipartisan committee also passed a
resolution to make the tape of the session public. But somehow when the senate went to listen to the tape later it was blank, according to Michael Brodkorb, communications director for the Republican caucus and deputy chair of the state party. He said this morning they don’t know how the session wasn’t recorded.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/10/11]

Fischbach’s Husband Led Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, And His Appointment Was Criticized By Pro-Choice Activists For A Potential Conflict Of Interest

Fischbach’s Husband Led Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life. “Her husband, Scott Fischbach, leads the state’s leading anti-abortion activist group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/29/12]

Pro-Choice Activists Criticized Fischbach’s Husband’s Appointment To Executive Director Of The Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Because He Would Lobby While Fischbach Was A Legislator.

“While Central Minnesota MCCL members seemed to like the choice of Scott Fischbach as the new executive director, at least a few abortion-rights advocates were less than thrilled. ‘I am shocked,’ said Jane Olsen, director of the Women’s Center at St. Cloud State University. ‘I am shocked because Michelle is a lobbyist and now her husband is going to be a lobbyist. And basically, the only issues she addresses at the Legislature are anti-abortion issues.’ […] ‘It just seems like a conflict of interest and it seems inappropriate,” Olsen said.”” [St. Cloud Times, 6/7/01]

Fischbach’s Husband Worked For A Candidate That Received The Endorsement Of The Mississippi Right To Life, While Fischbach Was On The Board Of The Organization

Fischbach’s Husband Was Hired By Then-Mississippi State Senator Charlie Ross As A Consultant For His Bid For Lieutenant Governor And Was Paid Over $7,000. “State Sen. Charlie Ross of Brandon got some recent headlines and some political bragging rights out of a key endorsement in his Republican lieutenant governor’s primary showdown with State Auditor Phil Bryant. […] Earlier this month, the Ross campaign reported $7,261 in total payments to Fischbach’s Coalition Productions firm. Ross said he hired Fischbach because ‘he’s worked in the past for Haley Barbour, Amy Tuck, Kirk Fordice and a lot of other successful Republican candidates.’” [Greenwood Commonwealth, 7/18/07]

Ross Received The Endorsement From The Mississippi Right To Life, Which Fischbach’s Husband Was Affiliated With. “State Sen. Charlie Ross of Brandon got some recent headlines and some political bragging rights out of a key endorsement in his Republican lieutenant governor’s primary showdown with State Auditor Phil Bryant. […] Ross said he was not aware that Fischbach was on the board of Mississippi Right to Life when he hired him prior to getting the group’s endorsement.” [Greenwood Commonwealth, 7/18/07]

2007: Scott Fischbach Was Accused Of Engaging In Pay-For-Play When Issuing Endorsements

2007: Scott Fischbach Ran A Consulting Firm While Serving On The Board Of Mississippi Right To Life, A Powerful Group That Endorsed Charlie Ross Over Phil Bryant In Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor Election

2007: Scott Was On The Board Of Mississippi Right To Life, And The Group Endorsed Charlie Ross Over Phil Bryant In Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor Election. “State Sen. Charlie Ross of Brandon got some recent headlines and some political bragging rights out of a key endorsement in his Republican lieutenant governor’s primary showdown with State Auditor Phil Bryant. Ross got the endorsement of the Mississippi Right to Life organization, one of the state’s major pro-life/anti-abortion groups. For conservative Republicans, it’s a coveted endorsement - one that will show up in paid political advertising as a conservative bona fide. To be sure, Mississippi Right to Life is a credible organization. Just as certain as that fact is that both Ross and Bryant are decidedly, unequivocally pro-life in their personal and political philosophies. […] Whitehead also confirmed that a key participant in selecting the slate of 396 Mississippi statewide and legislative candidates endorsed by the group
and ‘the real backbone of our organization’ is Scott Fischbach. Whitehead said Fischbach is a member of the board of Mississippi Right to Life. Fischbach is also the leader of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life and lives in Paynesville, Minn. He is the husband of Republican Minnesota state Sen. Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville.” [Greenwood Commonwealth, Sid Salter Op-Ed, 7/18/07]


Campaign Finance Records Showed That Ross Only Got The Endorsement After Paying Thousands Of Dollars To Scott’s Consulting Firm, Raising Questions About A Possible Quid Pro Quo

Ross Paid $7,261 Before Receiving Mississippi Right To Life’s Endorsement, But Denied Knowing That Scott Fischbach Was On Mississippi Right To Life’s Board. “Earlier this month, the Ross campaign reported $7,261 in total payments to Fischbach’s Coalition Productions firm. Ross said he hired Fischbach because ‘he’s worked in the past for Haley Barbour, Amy Tuck, Kirk Fordice and a lot of other successful Republican candidates.’ Ross said he was not aware that Fischbach was on the board of Mississippi Right to Life when he hired him prior to getting the group’s endorsement. ‘I hired him because he gets results and is effective,’ said Ross. ‘There was no quid pro quo.’” [Greenwood Commonwealth, Sid Salter Op-Ed, 7/18/07]

A March 2007 Memo From Fischbach To Bryant Showed Fischbach Telling Bryant He Wanted To “Do [His] Part To Ensure Your Victory;” Fischbach Said There Was “No Quid Pro Quo.” “Fischbach concurred in that assessment and said he did not participate in the choice of Ross for the endorsement but that after meeting Ross, ‘I decided I wanted to go with him.’ But a March 10, 2007, memo from Fischbach to Bryant paints a different picture. In that memo, which Fischbach confirmed, he said: ‘This race is going to be decided in the next 120 days and I want to do my part to ensure your victory.’ Bryant didn’t hire him. Fischbach said that despite his offer to Bryant, his hiring by Ross had nothing to do with Ross getting the endorsement. ‘It’s not like I said to Phil, hire me and you’ll get the endorsement,’ said Fischbach. ‘I met with both of them. I liked Phil, he’s pro-life, but I decided I wanted to go with Charlie. There was no quid pro quo, absolutely none.’” [Greenwood Commonwealth, Sid Salter Op-Ed, 7/18/07]

After Endorsing Ross In The Primary, Mississippi Right To Life Endorsed Bryant In The General Election, Raising Further Questions About The Group’s Credibility

Mississippi Right To Life Endorsed Bryant Over Democrat Jamie Franks In The General Election, Even Though The Group Previous Said Bryant And Ross Had “Equal” Pro-Life Records. “Mississippi Right to Life PAC’s chairperson Barbara Whitehead confirmed that fact to this writer in a July interview when she said that the group has in prior elections endorsed Bryant, Franks and Ross. Whitehead said: ‘All three candidates are pro-life. That will be on our Web site along with the information on all the other candidates that we sent questionnaires to. Jamie Franks and Charlie Ross both have pro-life voting records for these last four years. ‘Phil Bryant did in the past when he was in the Legislature. All three of them have been endorsed by the PAC. This makes them all equal.’ […] Now, in the general election, Mississippi Right to Life has endorsed Republicans Haley Barbour for governor, Bryant for lieutenant governor and Democratic House Speaker Billy McCoy for re-election to his House district. In July, with Bryant, Franks and Ross having ‘equal’ pro-life records according to Mississippi Right to Life, Ross was the choice. In October, now it’s Bryant. Mississippi Right to Life is a credible organization that is to be respected. But its political endorsement process lacks credibility.” [Clarion-Ledger, Sid Salter Op-Ed, 10/3/07]

2011: Scott Threatened Republican Leaders In Minnesota For Failing To Ban Abortion, Even Though His Wife Was Senate President At The Time
2011: Scott’s Pro-Life Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Tactfully Threatened Members Of GOP Leadership For Failing To Ban Abortion In Minnesota

2011: Scott’s Pro-Life Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Said It Would Have To “Address” The Failure Of Minnesota’s Republican Leaders To Ban Abortion As Part Of A Budget Agreement. “A budget agreement being hammered out by Gov. Mark Dayton and Republicans in the Minnesota Legislature aimed at ending a state government shutdown came under fire from the states largest anti-abortion group over the weekend. Dayton and Republicans made an agreement late last week to resolve Minnesota’s budget impasse, in part by avoiding controversial social issues such as abortion and focusing on fiscal matters. A representative for Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life told reporters that he now questions the pro-life credentials of GOP leaders and told Republican legislators to vote no on any budget agreement that does not ban abortion. In a veiled threat to Republicans, MCCLs Scott Fischbach told Minnesota Public Radio that his group will be taking a second look at Republican leaders. `We had operated under the assumption that we had pro-life leadership in both the House and the Senate. I think that there are many pro-lifers that are devastated now to the point of questioning some of that leadership, he said. And were going to have to address that down the road.’” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

…But Michelle Was A Member Of Republican Leadership At The Time

2011: Michelle Fischbach Was President Of The Minnesota Senate. “Fischbach’s wife is one of those in leadership. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, is the president of the Minnesota Senate.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

Scott Tried To Shift The Blame Away From Michelle And Onto Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch, Nothing That His Wife Was Not A Part Of Budget Negotiations. “SOCIAL ISSUES- IT’S ALL RELATIVE: MPR posted an interesting piece positing that the relationship between husband Scott Fischbach, head of MCCL and wife Michelle Fischbach, who is president of the Senate, could cause some problems in the passage of the budget bills. Social issues continue to put the heat on the GOP Senate caucus, it seems. MCCL’S Fischbach puts the finger on Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch for taking the abortion debate off the table, noting that his wife was not involved in budget negotiations.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

1997: Fischbach Had Long-Standing Ties To D.C. Elites.

1997: When She Was A Relatively Low-Profile State Senator, Fischbach Held A Washington D.C. Fundraiser Hosted By High-Profile Republicans


The Fundraiser Was Co-Hosted By Over Fifty Republicans, Including Bob Dole, Bill Brock, Rod Grams, And Vin Weber. “The list of hosts for a Washington fund-raiser this week read like a who’s who of Republican politics: former Sen. Bob Dole, former Republican National Committee Chair Bill Brock, Minnesota Sen. Rod Grams and former Minnesota Rep. Vin Weber. Big guns such as these usually appear at galas for well-known candidates, not relative political unknowns such as Minnesota state Sen. Michelle Fischbach. But Fischbach, a second-term legislator from Paynesville, was the honored guest Monday evening - prompting speculation that GOP kingmakers might have bigger things in mind for her. Despite the fancy invitation listing more than 50 co-hosts, the reception in a small room at an upscale Washington apartment building was modest. Of the big-name hosts, only Weber, an old family friend, made an appearance. However, Dole later phoned to wish her well and sent a $100 contribution, the legal maximum in Minnesota.” [Star Tribune, 11/27/97]

The Event Was Originally Planned As A Holiday Party, But Later Turned Into A Fundraiser. “Fischbach said that the event was originally planned as a holiday reunion with old friends, but that she and her husband, Scott, an aide to Dole’s 1996 presidential campaign, decided to turn it into a fund-raiser and get some publicity.” [Star Tribune, 11/26/97]
Fischbach Declined To State How Much Money Was Raised At The Fundraiser. “Fischbach declined to say how much money was raised from the two to three dozen people who attended.” [Star Tribune, 11/26/97]

Scott Fischbach Was A Former Aide To Bob Dole During His 1996 Presidential Campaign. “Fischbach said that the event was originally planned as a holiday reunion with old friends, but that she and her husband, Scott, an aide to Dole’s 1996 presidential campaign, decided to turn it into a fund-raiser and get some publicity.” [Star Tribune, 11/26/97]

Fischbach’s Congressional Campaign Received Tens Of Thousands In Donations From Washington Republican Leadership

<p>| Fischbach Donations From Republican Campaigns And Leadership PACs Donating More Than $5,000 |</p>
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[FEC, accessed 4/21/20; Open Secrets, accessed 4/21/20]
Significant Findings

✓ Fischbach was an obstacle to college affordability.

✓ In 2013, as chair of the Senate Education committee, Fischbach opposed tuition relief funding for the University of Minnesota, even though officials from the university system had requested funding that specifically included tuition relief.

✓ In 2013, Fischbach voted against a higher education funding package that sought to lower tuition costs.

✓ Fischbach was bad for public education.

✓ In 2000, Fischbach supported eliminating K-12 performance requirements in Minnesota.

✓ In 2003, Fischbach called for cuts to funding that went towards the arts and facility improvement in Minnesota.

✓ Fischbach was bad for teachers.

✓ In 2011, Fischbach advocated for and voted for sweeping education cuts that limited teachers’ bargaining rights, froze special education funding, and eliminated funding for racial integration.

✓ In 2005, Fischbach supported performance-based pay for teachers in Minnesota.

Fischbach Was Bad For Education

2013: As Chair Of The Senate Education Committee, Fischbach Opposed Tuition Relief Funding For The University of Minnesota System

2013: University Of Minnesota Officials Sought A $91 Million Funding Increase That Included Tuition Relief Funding

2013: The University Of Minnesota Sought A $91 Million Increase In State Funding, Which Would Have Brought The State’s Total Contribution To $1.18 Billion Over Two Years. “The 2013 Legislature marks University of Minnesota President Eric Kaler’s first chance to negotiate a budget request at the State Capitol. On the other end of those discussions, several of the key legislators hearing Kaler’s pitch will also be new, either thanks to retirements, redistricting or committee vacancies. Even the conversation itself will be new, thanks to a bold budget request designed by Kaler and approved by the University’s Board of Regents last week. The University is seeking a $91 million increase in state funding for the 2014-15 biennium, which, if granted, would bring the state’s total contribution to $1.18 billion over the two years.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

The Funding Request Included A $14.2 Million Tuition Relief Fund, Largely Tied To Performance Standards, That Would Have Lowered Tuition Costs. “The request includes a series of distinctive features that legislators and University administrators say could change the discussion about higher education. Among the innovations is a plan to freeze tuition rates for in-state undergraduates if the state grants a $14.2 million-per-year
‘tuition relief’ fund. Another $11.5 million of the proposal is tied to performance, and would reward the University if it meets certain ‘accountability’ goals.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

Fischbach Indicated Opposition To The Budget Request, Arguing That The University Of Minnesota Was Asking For “Quite A Bit Of Money,” And Expressed Skepticism Towards A Tuition Freeze

Fischbach Indicated That She Opposed The University Of Minnesota’s Budget Request Because They Were Asking For “Quite A Bit Of Money.” “On the Senate side, Senate Higher Education Committee Chair Michelle Fischbach expressed reservations about the bottom line numbers in the University’s request. ‘Generally,’ Fischbach said, ‘it’s very high. They’re asking for quite a bit of money, and we don’t know what the state’s budget is going to look like.’” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

Fischbach Was Skeptical About Embracing A State Tuition Freeze Costing $28 Million, Even Though She Conceded That It Would Be Politically Popular. “Without a complete budget forecast, Fischbach wasn’t ready to commit the necessary $28 million toward holding tuition rates, even if it might be a winning issue politically. ‘[The tuition freeze] is going to be a very popular item, with parents and students,’ Fischbach said, adding, ‘It’s hard to say how much money we’re going to have available. They put a very specific price tag on that tuition freeze.’” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

2013: State Tuition Had Increased Nearly 50 Percent Since 2006. “Fischbach had been privy to the outlines of the budget request, thanks to a meeting with Rohloff over the summer, one of several that he and other government relations staffers held with key lawmakers. One feature of the proposal that Fischbach likes, at least in theory, is the notion of slowing the growth of tuition costs. This year, in-state tuition runs $12,040 per student, an increase of nearly 50 percent since 2006.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

Fischbach Voted Against A Higher Education Funding Bill That Sought To Lower Tuition Costs

2013: The Senate Passed A Higher Education Budget Bill That Provided $1.2 Billion In Funding To Public Higher Education Systems In Minnesota, Including Funding For Tuition Freezes And Financial Aid

2013: By A 46-18 Vote, The Senate Passed A Higher Education Budget Bill That Provided $1.2 Billion In Funding To Public Higher Education Systems In Minnesota, Including Funding For Tuition Freezes And Financial Aid. “Minnesota senators easily approved a higher education budget bill Wednesday 46-18, but debate made it clear they want to hold the public schools accountable for spending. The bill would give about $1.2 billion each to the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities systems, about $80 million more each than current funding. ‘We’re covering the gamut of what it takes to provide the workforce of tomorrow,’ said Higher Education Chairwoman Sen. Terri Bonoff, DFL-Minnetonka. The plan aims to make college more affordable by directing funds toward tuition freezes and caps at public colleges and universities and allocating more funds for state financial aid.” [Duluth News Tribune, 4/18/13]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “The following area lawmakers voted against the bill: Sens. Paul Gazelka, R-Brainerd; Carrie Ruud, R-Breezy Point; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Scott Newman, R-Hutchinson; Julie Rosen, R-Fairmont; and Dave Thompson, R-Lakeville.” [Duluth News Tribune, 4/18/13]

Fischbach Was Bad For Public Education
2011: Fischbach Drafted A Budget That Made Large Cuts To The Minnesota State Colleges And Universities System. “As Higher Education Committee chairwoman, Fischbach played a key role in drafting a budget last year that made deep funding cuts to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which includes St. Cloud State University and St. Cloud Technical & Community College. Fischbach says the committee also has worked to make college and university spending more efficient through initiatives such as a fund that leverages private donations for equipment purchases at MnSCU campuses.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/29/12]

Fischbach Proposed A Bill That Would Cut $12 Million For St. Cloud State University Over The Next Two Years. “According to Fischbach, her bill would cut funding for St. Cloud State University by $12 million in the next two years. That figure includes the bill’s cut in projected state funding, and accounts for the maximum tuition the bill would allow the university to collect.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/10/11]

Fischbach Said That Colleges And Universities “Understand The Situation The State Is In” When It Comes To Budget Cuts. “But Fischbach says colleges and universities have spent months preparing for the outcome of this year’s budgeting process, which many expected would yield deep cuts as the state balances a $5 billion two-year deficit. ‘They all understand the situation that the state is in,’ Fischbach said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/10/11]

Fischbach Voted Against Her Own Higher Education Bill When A Provision Banning Stem Cell Research Was Dropped From The Bill, Angering Her Caucus. “At the eye of the storm, predictably, is Senate President and higher education chair Michelle Fischbach, who angered both leadership and many rank-and-file senators when she broke from her caucus to vote against her own higher ed bill over the dropping of a provision to outlaw embryonic stem cell research at state-funded institutions. Fischbach, who is married to Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL) head Scott Fischbach, may yet lose her leadership post and/or her higher ed gavel over the defection, and that prospect would set off a domino-effect tussle within the caucus over refilling not only Fischbach’s position(s) but other committee chairmanships put into play as a result. One rumor, for example, has Sen. Julianne Ortman possibly ascending to the Senate presidency in Fischbach’s place, thus in all likelihood opening a powerful and coveted position at the head of the Taxes Committee.” [St. Paul Ledger Capitol Report, 8/12/11]

2000: Fischbach Opposed Full State Funding Of K-12 Public Education. “Fischbach opposes 100 percent state funding of K-12 education, fearing a loss of local control. She also opposes further restrictions on personal watercraft and supports market-based solutions to rising health care costs, such as medical savings accounts.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/31/00]

Fischbach Supported School Vouchers. According to Vote Smart, Fischbach supported “provid[ing] parents with state-funded vouchers to send their children to any participating school (public, private, religious, technical).” [Vote Smart, accessed 8/14/19]
2018: Fischbach Authored A Bill That Invested 36 Million In The Minnesota State Grant Program, Ensuring Lower And Middle-Income Families Received Direct Financial Aid

2018: Fischbach Authored The Higher Education Omnibus Bill Which Invested 36 Million In The Minnesota State Grant Program. “In the Minnesota Senate, Fischbach chaired the Senate Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee during the 2017 Session. In this role, Fischbach was chief author of the Higher Education Omnibus Bill, which invested $36 million in the Minnesota State Grant Program, which ensures lower- and middle-income families receive direct financial aid to help afford college and career training.” [State News Service, 5/25/18]

2002: Fischbach Supported Cutting Costs In Administration For K-12 And Higher Education – But Opposed Cuts To Classroom Dollars

2002: Fischbach Supported Cutting Costs In Administration For K-12 And Higher Education – But Opposed Cuts To Classroom Dollars. “Fischbach said she would look at cutting some costs in administration of K-12 and higher education and the state departments that direct them. She is not in favor of anything that cuts classroom dollars, she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/19/02]

2003: Fischbach Called For Cuts To Funding For Arts Education And Improvement Of School Facilities

2003: Fischbach Lamented That The State Had Not Made Cuts To The Arts Education Funding And Funding For Improving School Facilities. “It made things extra interesting. It allowed and forced all committee chairs to open up their budget books and have each member look for ways to save money or create monies. I was happy when the governor announced that schools will be held harmless. Yet that too created a problem. That’s where half of the state’s dollars were spent. I felt we could have freed up money from existing programs such as the Perpich Center for the Arts, Alternative Facilities Aid and others. Here are millions of dollars spent foolishly that could better be used in the classroom. It must be remembered that less than half of the money spent for education goes to the classroom.” [St. Cloud Times, 6/8/03]

Alternative Facilities Aid Was A Minnesota Program Designed To Fund Facilities Improvement Projects For Minnesota Schools. “Alternative Facilities Revenue supports the following statewide outcome(s). […] Minnesotans have the education and skills needed to achieve their goals. School districts, students, and taxpayers are better served through healthy, well-maintained facilities, and through extension of facility life. This program allows large school districts to complete deferred maintenance, health and safety, and disabled accessibility projects that cannot be completed with other available funds and small school districts to address large scale health and safety projects.” [Minnesota Department of Management & Budget, accessed 1/10/20]

The Perpich Center For Arts Education Was The Agency In Charge Of Funding Arts Education Across Minnesota. “We are a state agency charged with fostering arts education across the state of Minnesota. There are three facets of our organization: an art school that delivers a public education centered in the arts for 11th and 12th graders from across the state of Minnesota; an outreach program that studies, supports, and funds arts education in the state; a state-wide lending library with a highly-developed collection of arts education materials and a SEED collection.” [Youth Speaks, Perpich Center for Arts Education, accessed 1/10/20]

2011: While She Was Senate Majority Leader, Fischbach Advocated For And Voted For Sweeping Cuts To Education Funding

2011: Senate Republicans Passed An Education Bill That Curbed Teachers’ Bargaining Rights, Expanded Voucher Programs, Froze Special Education Funding, And Eliminated Racial Integration Funding
2011: Senate Republicans Passed An Education Bill That Curbed Teachers’ Bargaining Rights And Expanded Private School Voucher Programs. “The Republican-sponsored bill passed 68-59 at about 2:45 a.m., after nearly six hours of sometimes contentious debate in which Democrats assured Republicans that Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton would veto the measure because it contains policy changes he doesn’t support. The bill scrapes teacher tenure for the state’s K-12 schools in favor of an evaluation-based approach that makes student test scores a major factor. It contains multiple curbs on teacher bargaining rights, including the strike ban. It also creates a system for grading schools that would award additional state funds to those that perform well. The bill wades into another area of disagreement between Republicans and Democrats by granting vouchers to help low-income families at failing public schools pay for private educations.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

The Bill Eliminated Aid To Foster Racial Integration In Parts Of Minnesota That Had Large Minority Populations, And Froze Special Education Funding. “It also eliminates aid aimed at promoting racial integration in Twin Cities schools that have large minority populations, and freezes special education funds.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

Democrats Criticized The Funding Bill, And Governor Mark Dayton Said He Would Veto It

Democrats Said The Bill Made Cuts That Hurt Minnesota’s Poorest And Most Vulnerable Communities. “House Democrats were uniform in their criticism, saying the bill’s cuts and policy changes would fall hardest on poorer districts. ‘There’s a lot of bad and ugly in it,’ Rep. Mindy Greiling, DFL-Roseville, said of the bill. In a letter to Garofalo, state Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius said she and Dayton don’t support the legislation. She said they hope to find common ground with Republicans but that the bill passed early Wednesday is ‘inherently harmful to at-risk students.’” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

Governor Mark Dayton Planned To Veto The Bill Due To Its Special Education Freeze, Voucher Expansion, And Elimination Of Racial Integration Funding. “The Republican-sponsored bill passed 68-59 at about 2:45 a.m., after nearly six hours of sometimes contentious debate in which Democrats assured Republicans that Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton would veto the measure because it contains policy changes he doesn’t support. […] Cassellius said she and Dayton take issue with the special education freeze, the elimination of racial integration funding and the voucher provision. She wrote that they were troubled by the strike prohibition and the elimination of tenure, and said efforts to promote better teacher performance should be undertaken in a separate bill. The K-12 education vote in the House capped a long day, night and early morning of debate in both the House and Senate on GOP-assembled budget bills. In addition to the K-12 bill, the House on Tuesday passed bills funding higher education and environment and natural resources programs; the Senate passed budget bills for higher education, environment and natural resources, and judiciary and public safety.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

Fischbach Defended The Funding Bill, And Dismissed Concerns From University Of Minnesota Officials Who Projected That The Bill Would Cost Them Over $200 Million In Funding

Fischbach Said That Even Though The Cuts “Sound[ed] Like Large Amounts Of Money,” They Weren’t Truly That Bad Because They Would Not “Put The Universities Out Of Business.” “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, acknowledged that potential cuts to individual campuses ‘sound like large amounts of money’ but said they were relatively small in relation to the entire campus budgets. Fischbach said the reductions ‘will not cut so deep that they put the universities out of business,’ dismissing comments by Democrats that the proposal could force some smaller state schools to close.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

University Of Minnesota Officials Projected That The Funding Bill Would Cost Them $243 Million In Aid. “University of Minnesota officials predicted the Senate bill would cost them about $243 million in state aid, a bigger cut than the House or Dayton sought. Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, warned that the reduction would be ‘economically devastating’ to the university and reverberate throughout the state’s economy.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]
2013: Fischbach Voted Against An Education Funding Bill That Provided Funding For All Day Kindergarten And Special Education Services In Minnesota

2013: The Senate Passed An Education Funding Bill That, Among Other Things, Funded All Day Kindergarten And Special Education Services In Minnesota

2013: By A 35-28 Vote, The Senate Passed An Education Funding Bill That Included Funding For All-Day Kindergarten And $9 Million In New Funding For Special Education. “The state Senate has passed its education budget to provide funding for all-day kindergarten. The $15.6 billion package spends the most of all budget bills in the Senate. It passed Thursday on a 35-28 vote. […] The Senate bill provides $9 million in new funding for special education, an amount Pederson dismissed as insignificant. He also said the bill doesn’t do enough to reduce special education mandates for school districts.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/26/13]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill


2013: Fischbach Voted Against A Bill To Freeze Tuition In Minnesota For Two Years

2013: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Bill To Increase Higher Education Spending And Freeze College Tuition For Two Years. “A budget bill for Minnesota colleges and universities that freezes tuition for the next two years is en route to the desk of Gov. Mark Dayton. Gov. Mark Dayton’s spokeswoman has confirmed he will sign the higher ed bill. The Minnesota House voted Friday to pass the bill, 76-56. Hours earlier the Senate passed it, 44-22. The bill would increase state spending on higher education by $250 million in the next two years. That includes a $102 million boost to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, or MnSCU, the statewide system that includes St. Cloud State University and at St. Cloud Technical & Community College.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/17/13]


Fischbach Was Bad For Teachers

2005: Fischbach Supported Performance-Based Pay For Minnesota Teachers

2005: Tim Pawlenty Pushed A Plan To Encourage School Districts To Negotiate Performance-Based Pay Agreements With Teachers

2005: Tim Pawlenty Pushed A Plan To Encourage School Districts To Negotiate Performance-Based Pay Agreements With Teachers. “The opportunity to have more teachers like Kvas serve as master or mentor teachers through a performance-based pay system has intrigued St. Cloud school district administrators. Gov. Tim Pawlenty is pushing the plan, and support is growing among school officials and lawmakers. Pawlenty’s proposal would attempt to expand statewide what is being tried in three Minneapolis schools and two rural Minnesota school
districts. It encourages school districts to negotiate a performance-based pay system with its teachers and includes the money to give it a try.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/05]

Fischbach Hoped School Districts Would Support Pawlenty’s Plan, And That The State Senate Would In Turn Move To Support It As Well

Fischbach Hoped School Districts Would Support Pawlenty’s Plan, And That The State Senate Would In Turn Move To Support It As Well. “The key to getting something done in the Senate this year will be demonstrations of support for Pawlenty’s plan from school districts statewide, said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who serves on the K-12 Education Budget Division. ‘If you see the districts showing interest, you’ll see the Senate move,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/05]
HEADLINE: Fischbach Sued Again Over Double Duties. [Minnesota Public Radio, 4/10/18]

HEADLINE: Fischbach Says She’ll Back Trump On Trade, Other Issues. [Minnesota Public Radio, 9/3/19]

HEADLINE: ‘Conservative Squad’ Forms To Combat Socialism: ‘This Is Not Your Grandfather’s GOP Anymore.’ [Fox News, 12/12/19]

HEADLINE: Brodkorb Firing ‘Flabbergasted’ Ex-GOP Senate Leader. [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]
Personal & Professional History
Biography

This section provides background information on Fischbach’s personal life, including education, personal finances, criminal and civil record, and other areas.

Birth Date

November 3rd, 1965

Education


Career

The following provides a brief overview of Fischbach’s professional career:

Political
- Unknown Dates: Paynesville City Councilwoman
- 2018 – 2019: Lieutenant Governor

Professional
- July 2019 – December 2019: Government Affairs Director, Central Minnesota Builders Association

Personal History

2009: Fischbach Was Extorted By Police Officers In Cancun, In An Incident That Made Front-Page Headlines In Mexico

2009: During A Trip To Cancun, Fischbach And Her Husband Were Pulled Over By Police Officers Who Took Her Husband’s License And Demanded $300

2009: Scott Fischbach Was Pulled Over By Cancun Police Officers For Driving A Mile Per Hour Over The Speed Limit. “Piece of cake,’ the three police officers might have thought when they spied the rental car with five American tourists driving down the main drag of Cancun’s hotel zone. They pulled the car over and told the driver, Scott Fischbach, that he was going about a mile an hour over the speed limit, recalled his wife, Michelle L. Fischbach.” [New York Times, 10/29/09]

After Initially Trying To Breathalyze Scott, But Finding That He Did Not Drink Alcohol, The Officers Demanded $300, Or Threatened To Jail Him. “One of the officers cupped his hands and asked Mr. Fischbach to
Michelle Fischbach (MN-07) Research Book | 33

‘This was their Breathalyzer,’ Mrs. Fischbach said, recounting her astonishment on the last night of her vacation with her husband, his sister and brother-in-law and their daughter. ‘They tried very hard, but Scott doesn’t drink.’ The police took his driver’s license and told him they would take him to jail unless he came up with $300, she said.

**After Being Escorted Back To Their Hotel, The Fischbachs Came Up With The $300.** “The patrol car escorted the family back to the hotel, where she says the group came up with the money. The officers declined to write a receipt.” [New York Times, 10/29/09]

**Eight Months After The Incident, The Cancun City Government Released Details To The Public, Which Thereby Generated Front-Page News Coverage In Mexico**

Eight Months After The Incident, The Cancun City Government Released Its Details To The Public, Which Generated Front-Page News In Mexico. “What the police may not have expected, however, was that Mrs. Fischbach was a Minnesota state senator—or that she would complain so effectively. […] On Wednesday, the episode made front-page news in Mexico after Cancun officials released the information to news organizations, some eight months after the event. (Yes, those police officers were fired long ago.)” [New York Times, 10/29/09]

**Fischbach Wrote A Letter To The Mayor Of Cancun To Complain About The Incident, And Was Reimbursed 4,000 Pesos From The City Government**

Fischbach Wrote A Letter To Cancun Mayor Gregorio Sanchez To Complain About The Incident, And Highlighted That She Was A Minnesota State Legislator. “But apart from drunken driving, even the most serious violation usually costs no more than $50. When Mrs. Fischbach returned home, she wrote a letter to Gregorio Sanchez Martinez, Cancun’s mayor, mentioning her position as a state legislator. It caught his notice. ‘I personally attended to it,’ Mr. Sanchez told reporters on Wednesday. ‘In this administration, we will not tolerate any corruption.’” [New York Times, 10/29/09]

**The Fischbachs Were Reimbursed 4,000 Pesos, Or About $300, For The Incident.** “And in Paynesville, Minn., an hour and a half northwest of St. Paul, the Fischbachs got a check in the mail for about 4,000 pesos, about $300, from the Cancun city government reimbursing them.” [New York Times, 10/29/09]

**Professional History**

**July 2019 – December 2019: Fischbach Was Government Affairs Director At The Central Minnesota Builders Association**

July 2019: Fischbach Joined The Central Minnesota Builders Association As Government Affairs Director, Where She Worked Part Time To “Maintain A Working Relationship” With Politicians And Government Officials. “The Central Minnesota Builders Association announced Michelle Fischbach as the organization’s new government affairs director. Fischbach served as lieutenant governor in 2018, served as the president of the state Senate in 2017-18 and 2011-12, and as a state senator since 1996. Fischbach will be working part time at the CMBA office to maintain a working relationship with elected officials and agencies in the CMBA service territory, specifically the St. Cloud region, as well as with counterparts at the city, county, state and national levels on matters that affect the industry and CMBA members.” [St. Cloud Times, 7/29/19]

December 2019: Fischbach Left The Central Minnesota Builders Association To Run For Congress. “The Central Minnesota Builders Association has hired Steve Gottwalt as its new government affairs consultant. Gottwalt steps into the part-time contract role this month, replacing Michelle Fischbach who recently left the position to run for Congress in Minnesota’s 7th District. Jane DeAustin recently retired after holding the position for 17 years.” [St. Cloud Times, 12/16/19]
2018-2019: Fischbach Earned Income From National Right To Life

According To Fischbach’s Personal Financial Disclosure She Had Earned $24,000 From National Right To Life In 2019 As Of October 2, 2019. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

According To Fischbach’s Personal Financial Disclosure She Earned $36,000 From National Right To Life In 2018. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

Criminal Record

Fischbach Was Associated With One Petty Misdemeanor For “Traffic Regulation - Vehicle Registration/Permit/Plates Required.” In June 2015, in Hennepin County, Michelle Fischbach was charged with “Traffic Regulation - Vehicle Registration/Permit/Plates Required” and pled guilty. She was fined $30, plus $78 in fees. [Minnesota Register of Actions, Case No. 27-VB-15-271115429756, disposition 7/18/15]

Judgments Or Liens

Fischbach Was Not Associated With Any Judgments Or Liens. [Nexis Comprehensive Persons Report, accessed 6/11/19]

NOTE: Further research necessary.

In 2018, Fischbach Was Sued Twice By Destiny Dusosky, And Both Cases Were Dismissed. In January and April of 2018, Destiny Dusosky of Sauk Rapids, MN sued Michelle Fischbach. Both cases were dismissed without prejudice, in February of 2018 and June 2018, respectively. They are listed as companion cases by the Minnesota Register of Actions. [Minnesota Register of Actions, Case No. 62-CV-18-254, 1/12/18; Minnesota Register of Actions, Case No. 62-CV-18-2348, 4/10/18]

Dusosky’s Lawsuit Was Related To Fischbach’s Attempt To Serve As Both Lt. Governor And State Senator. “Destiny Dusosky, a Sauk Rapids resident and constituent of Lieutenant Governor Michelle Fischbach, filed a lawsuit today after being adversely affected by the Lt. Gov's attempt to hold both the office of lieutenant governor and state senator.” [Minnesota DFL, Facebook, 4/10/18]

NOTE: For more information, please see the Ethics chapter.

Bankruptcy Filings


NOTE: Further research necessary.

Voter Registration & History

Fischbach Was Registered To Vote In Paynesville, MN. [Michelle Fischbach profile, VoteBuilder, accessed 4/8/20]

According to VoteBuilder, Michelle Fischbach’s voting history is depicted below:
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Michelle Fischbach profile, VoteBuilder, accessed 02/01/20]
Personal Finance

In 2019, Fischbach had an estimated net worth of between $53,014 to $645,000.

NOTE: For detailed descriptions of Fischbach’s personal financial disclosures by year, see Appendix I – Personal Financial Disclosures.

2019 – Federal Personal Financial Disclosure

Net Worth

2019: Fischbach Had An Estimated Net Worth Between $53,014 And $645,000

2019: Fischbach Had An Estimated Net Worth Between $53,014 And $645,000. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

Earned Income

2018: Fischbach Reported $99,500 In Earned Income

Through September 2019, Fischbach Reported $33,200 In Earned Income. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Amount (YTD)</th>
<th>Amount (2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life</td>
<td>Spouse Salary</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Right to Life</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Minnesota</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$63,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Minnesota Builders Association</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>$33,200.00</td>
<td>$99,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[2019 Fischbach Earned Income]

[2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

Assets & Unearned Income

2019: Fischbach Reported Between $253,014 And $720,000 In Assets

2019: Fischbach Reported Between $253,014 And $720,000 In Assets. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SP/ DC /JT</th>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Year-End Value</th>
<th>Type Of Income</th>
<th>Amount Of Income (YTD)</th>
<th>Amount Of Income (2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Min Max</td>
<td></td>
<td>Min Max</td>
<td>Min Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Fund Balanced Fund A</td>
<td>$15,001</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Fund Capital World</td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[2019 Fischbach Assets & “Unearned” Income]

[2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SP</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name Of Organization</th>
<th>Total:</th>
<th>Total:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Fund Euro-Pacific Growth Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Fund Growth Fund of America A</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Fund Retirement Target Date Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100,001</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Fund Mutual Fund A</td>
<td></td>
<td>$15,001</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Funds Balanced Fund A</td>
<td></td>
<td>$15,001</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Funds Growth Fund A</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Funds New Perspective Fund A</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Funds New Perspective Fund A</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clear Bridge Small Cap C</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clear Bridge Value Trust C</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farmland Belgrade</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50,001</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rental Home Paynesville</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50,001</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State of Minnesota Pension</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JT Central Minnesota Credit Union</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>Mortgage on Rental Property</td>
<td>$15,001 - $50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A Great Lakes Student Loan</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>$50,001 - $100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A Nelnet</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>$10,000 - $50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Liabilities

#### 2019 Fischbach Liabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Creditor</th>
<th>Date Incurred</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Amount Of Liability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JT</td>
<td>Central Minnesota Credit Union</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>Mortgage on Rental Property</td>
<td>$15,001 - $50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Great Lakes Student Loan</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>$50,001 - $100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Nelnet</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>$10,000 - $50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Positions

#### 2019 Fischbach Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name Of Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>St. Cloud Hospital Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Agreements

#### 2019: Fischbach Reported No Agreements
## Political Career

### Significant Findings

✓ Fischbach was long speculated to be a candidate for higher office in Minnesota. She was regularly rumored to be a potential candidate for Congress, Governor, and Lieutenant Governor.

✓ In 2018, Fischbach ascended to the role of Lieutenant Governor after her predecessor, Tina Smith, was appointed to the U.S. Senate.

✓ In 2010, Fischbach became the first woman to be president of the Minnesota Senate

✓ In 2008, Fischbach was named Deputy Senate Minority Leader.

✓ In 1996, Fischbach was elected to the State Senate.

✓ In 1995, Fischbach became the first woman elected to the Paynesville City Council.

✓ Fischbach’s political career centered around support for tax cuts and opposition to abortion rights.

✓ In 2020, Fischbach ran for Congress.

✓ GOP Leader Kevin McCarthy endorsed Fischbach.

✓ Fischbach was part of a “Conservative Squad” of four white women running for Congress meant to rival a group of four progressive women of color already serving in congress.

✓ Fischbach and her husband had long-standing ties to Washington D.C. In 1997, when she was a low-profile state senator, Fischbach held a fundraiser in Washington that was hosted by high profile Republicans, including Bob Dole, Bill Brock, Rod Grams, and Vin Weber.

### Election Results

#### 2018 Lieutenant Governor Republican Primary Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donna Bergstrom (R)</td>
<td>168,841</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>140,743</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Loeffler (R)</td>
<td>11,330</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 8/14/18]

#### 2016 Minnesota State Senate SD-13 Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>29,235</td>
<td>68.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Willemsen (D)</td>
<td>13,338</td>
<td>31.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITE-IN**</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 11/10/16]

#### 2012 Minnesota State Senate SD-13 Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2012 Minnesota State Senate SD-13 Republican Primary Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (Incumbent)</td>
<td>1,484</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fadumo Yusuf</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 11/9/12]

### 2010 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>21422</td>
<td>63.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Sharp (DFL)</td>
<td>12110</td>
<td>36.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-In</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 8/17/12]

### 2006 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>19,668</td>
<td>57.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Stacke (DFL)</td>
<td>14,215</td>
<td>41.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-In</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 1/19/11]

### 2002 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 General Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>18,356</td>
<td>56.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn Schurman (DFL)</td>
<td>13,848</td>
<td>42.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-In</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 11/19/02]

### 2002 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 Republican Primary Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>3,061</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 9/17/02]

### 2000 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 General Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>23,126</td>
<td>64.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Sharp (DFL)</td>
<td>12,582</td>
<td>35.24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 11/21/00]

### 2000 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 Republican Primary Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>1,627</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Minnesota Secretary of State, Election Results, 10/19/00]

### 1996 Minnesota State Senate SD-14 General Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fischbach (R)</td>
<td>16,777</td>
<td>53.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Stacke (DFL)</td>
<td>14,831</td>
<td>46.98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fischbach Was A Career Politician, And Was Long Speculated To Be A Candidate For Higher Office In Minnesota

2018: Fischbach Was The Republican Nominee For Lieutenant Governor In Minnesota

2018: Fischbach Was Announced As Former Governor Tim Pawlenty’s Running Mate And GOP Candidate For Lieutenant Governor. “‘The Pawlenty, Fischbach team ... it still makes me smile when I say that.’ Lt. Gov. Michelle Fischbach Lt. Gov. Michelle Fischbach would be ready to take over as governor ‘from day one’ if the need arose, said former Gov. Tim Pawlenty as he promoted Fischbach as his running mate Thursday. The two held a press conference outside the Stearns County Courthouse with supporters and other local officials in the noon heat. They stood in front of a banner that said ‘Pawlenty Fischbach 2018.’ They’re running for the state’s top offices.” [St. Cloud Times, 6/1/18]

2018: Fischbach And Her Running Mate Did Not Receive The Minnesota GOP’s Endorsement In The Gubernatorial Race

2018: The Minnesota GOP Endorsed Jeff Johnson For Governor, Over The Pawlenty-Fischbach Ticket. “Hennepin County Commissioner Jeff Johnson won the official Republican party endorsement for governor Saturday. But his battle for the full support of Republicans is just beginning. That’s because Johnson now squares off against former Gov. Tim Pawlenty in an August primary. […] Starting Monday, Pawlenty and his running mate, former state Senate President and current Lt. Governor Michelle Fischbach, will embark on a barnstorming or airport-storming tour of the state. Events are planned at airports in Moorhead, Duluth, Rochester and Mankato before returning to St. Paul for an afternoon news conference at the Capitol.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/2/18]

2017: Despite Ascending To The Role Of Lieutenant Governor, Fischbach Tried To Hold Onto Her Senate Seat Because Senate Republicans Held A One Vote Majority In The Legislature

As State Senate President, Fischbach Became Lieutenant Governor When Lt. Gov. Tina Smith Resigned To Join Accept A Senate Appointment After Sen. Franken Resigned. “Here’s how Fischbach, 52, an eight-term lawmaker from Paynesville, landed in her predicament: Democrat Al Franken, accused of sexual misconduct, resigned from the U.S. Senate on Jan. 2. Dayton appointed DFL Lt. Gov. Tina Smith to replace him. Smith resigned from her state office. Under the Minnesota Constitution, the president of the Senate — Fischbach — automatically became lieutenant governor.” [Twin Cities Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

Despite Ascending To The Role Of Lieutenant Governor, Fischbach Tried To Hold Onto Her Senate Seat Because Senate Republicans Held A One Vote Majority In The Legislature. “That automatic ascension of Fischbach created awkwardness, not only because she and Dayton are of opposite parties, but also because Republicans clung to a one-vote majority in the Senate. As such, Fischbach refused to take the oath as lieutenant governor, referring to herself only as ‘acting lieutenant governor. She also refused to resign her Senate seat, a maneuver that drew a pair of lawsuits from Democrats who alleged that was a violation of the state Constitution.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 5/31/18]

NOTE: For more on the resulting lawsuit, please see the Ethics chapter.

2012: Fischbach Was Speculated To Be A Potential Candidate For MN-06

2012: Fischbach Was Rumored To Be A Potential Candidate For MN-06 After Then U.S. Rep. Michelle Bachmann Suspended Her Congressional Campaign To Run For President. “State Senate President Michelle
Fischbach isn’t saying if she’s interested in a run for Congress in 2012. Reports suggest leading Republicans view Fischbach as a potential successor to Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Stillwater, in Minnesota’s 6th Congressional District. Bachmann suspended her congressional re-election bid earlier this year to run for president, while leaving open the possibility of later restarting her congressional campaign. Fischbach says Bachmann’s decision about whether to seek re-election to Congress is a huge question mark.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/2/11]

**Fischbach Said Her Decision On Whether Or Not To Run Was Contingent On Redistricting, And Said She Would Just Have To “Wait And See” Before Making A Decision.** “Another, Fischbach says, is the outcome of the once-a-decade process of redrawing of political boundaries. State law says the redistricting process must be completed by February 2012. For now, Fischbach says it’s premature to speculate on a congressional run. But she won’t rule one out, either. ‘I’m really focused on the 2012 session,’ Fischbach said. […] But for now, Fischbach isn’t shedding light on her potential aspirations to higher office. ‘There’s a lot that would have to happen,’ Fischbach said. ‘We have to just wait and see.’” [St. Cloud Times, 10/2/11]

**2010: Fischbach Became The First Woman To Be President Of The Minnesota Senate**

2010: Fischbach Became The First Woman To Be President Of The Minnesota Senate. “The state Senate GOP made history by electing a woman for the first time as majority leader. They also elected the Senate’s first womanpresident. Sen. Amy Koch, R-Buffalo, who organized the Republicans’ takeover of the Senate for the first time in 38 years, was elected majority leader at the caucuses’ closed-door meeting in Room 10 of the State Office Building. Senate Republicans will have a 37-30 majority when the next Legislature is sworn in in January. The Senate GOP’s current leader, Dave Senjem, of Rochester, opted not to run for the majority leader post. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, was chosen as Senate president, a job that is responsible for parliamentary matters on the Senate floor. Sen. Gen Olson, R-Minnetrista, who according to one GOP source was a candidate for president, will serve as president pro tem.” [Saint Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 11/6/10]

**2010: Fischbach Was Appointed To The National Board Of GOPAC, A Conservative Group That Aimed To Recruit And Train Republican Candidates At The Local Level**

2010: Fischbach Was Named To GOPAC’s Advisory Board, And Said She Would Use Her Position To Communicate With Legislative Leaders Across The Country. “State Sen. Michelle Fischbach, tapped to be Minnesota Senate president next year, is getting recognition from a national group that recruits and trains Republican politicians. Fischbach, R-Paynesville, has been named to the 2011 Legislative Leaders Advisory Board of GOPAC. The group was founded to build a ‘farm team’ of Republican candidates at the state and local levels, according to the website. Fischbach says she’ll use the position to communicate with legislators in other states. She acknowledged the nomination may have been partly triggered by her role in the GOP state Senate takeover of 2010. Fischbach aided Sen. Amy Koch, R-Buffalo - the next Senate Majority Leader - in recruiting and training candidates who enabled Republicans to take over the state Senate for the first time in nearly 40 years.” [St. Cloud Times, 12/19/10]

**GOPAC Was A Conservative Group Dedicated To Recruiting And Training Conservative Candidates.**

“Since 1978, GOPAC has been a force in America because we realize Republicans must champion the ideas that unite voters around a vision of creating jobs, getting government spending under control, making government more effective, and keeping America safe. This is why Republicans turn to GOPAC for coaching and best practices on effective ways to communicate conservative ideas and solutions. GOPAC has proven success at building a healthy roster of prepared and tested Republican leaders ready to run for higher office.” [GOPAC, Mission, accessed 1/18/20]

2009: When A Group Of Legislators Was Asked To Raise Their Hands If They Would Rule Out A Gubernatorial Run, Fischbach Did Not Raise Her Hand. “Gov. Tim Pawlenty’s departure from the 2010 race for Minnesota governor set off a scramble Tuesday among possible Republican candidates for the job. [...] After Pawlenty’s announcement, a quartet of top legislative Republicans including Seifert, Hann, Senate Minority Leader David Senjem of Rochester and Sen. Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville held an impromptu news conference. When asked to raise their hands if they were out of the running, none did.” [Associated Press, 6/2/09]

2009: Gov. Pawlenty Announced He Would Not Run For Re-Election In 2010. “Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R-MN) won’t run for re-election in 2010, a signal that the Republican governor, who has acquired a national profile in recent years, is thinking about a 2012 presidential bid. Pawlenty will make the announcement today in a news conference scheduled for 3:00 pm ET.” [The Atlantic, 6/2/09]

2008: Fischbach Was Named Deputy Senate Minority Leader

2008: Fischbach Was Named Deputy Senate Minority Leader, Making Her The Second Highest Ranking Republican In The Minnesota State Senate. “Another St. Cloud-area legislator will serve in a leadership position in St. Paul next year. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, was named deputy minority leader in the Senate Republican caucus this week, making her second in command to Senate Minority Leader Dave Senjem, R-Rochester. Fischbach is serving her fifth term in the Minnesota Senate and will replace Betsy Wergin of Princeton, who resigned this year after Gov. Tim Pawlenty appointed her to the state Public Utilities Commission.” [St. Cloud Times, 12/18/08]

2004: Fischbach Was A Minnesota Delegate At The Republican National Convention

2004: Fischbach Was A Minnesota Delegate At The Republican National Convention. “Nine years of phone calls, door knocking, parade walking and envelope stuffing is paying off for Rosella Dambowy, a first-time delegate to the Republican National Convention. [...] Sorting out any confusion concerning those delegates’ credentials is state Sen. Michelle Fischbach’s job and that of her fellow credentials committee members. Fischbach, R-Paynesville, arrived Thursday in New York to help the committee prepare for the delegates. ‘They say it’s the first time there’s not been any challenges raised to someone’s credentials,’ she said. Convention delegates were elected at the Republican Congressional District conventions, as was Dambowy, or at the state conventions. Fischbach was elected at the state convention to be an at-large delegate, as was Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Delegates typically campaign for election, including speeches and fliers, Fischbach said.” [St. Cloud Times, 8/30/04]

2003: Fischbach Was Rumored To Be A Potential Candidate For MN-06 In The U.S. House Of Representatives

2003: After Incumbent U.S. Rep Mark Kennedy Was Rumored To Be Mulling A Senate Run, Fischbach Was Speculated To Be A Potential Candidate To Replace Him In MN-07. “For most people, even the 2004 presidential election still seems a long way off. But for people who live and breathe politics as a profession or hobby, their gaze already is drifting further down the road. For Minnesota political insiders, it’s time to start thinking about the 2006 U.S. Senate race. What those political junkies envision now is likely to affect the choices the rest of Minnesota has when it’s finally time to mark ballots in three years. And when Republican activists talk about the race in which they hope to remove Democratic U.S. Sen. Mark Dayton, the name they mention most often as a potential challenger is 6th District Rep. Mark Kennedy. [...] Among the potential Republican candidates being talked about to run for the 6th District seat: state Reps. Phil Krinkie of Shoreview and Jim Knoblach of St. Cloud, state Sens. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, Michele Bachmann of Stillwater, Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer and former U.S. Sen. Rod Grams.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 10/27/03]

2000: Fischbach’s Re-Election Campaign Themes Revolved Around Tax Cuts And Opposition To Abortion Rights
2000: Fischbach’s Re-Election Campaign Themes Revolved Around Tax Cuts And Opposition To Abortion Rights. “Fischbach contrasts her views on abortion - she’s a strong opponent - and taxation - favors further tax cuts, with those of her opponent. In return, Sharp, 41, paints himself as a forward-thinking candidate who favors progressive tax reform, state land-use regulation and innovative solutions to his district’s agriculture problems. Ultimately, the race to represent this sprawling district will be decided by how many doors candidates knock on and who shows up to vote, said Jim Read, chairman of the political science department of St. John’s University and College of St. Benedict and also the district DFL chairman.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/25/00]

2000: Fischbach Was Endorsed By The St. Cloud Chamber Of Commerce, Even Though She Failed To Fill Out Their Candidate Questionnaires

1997: Fischbach Was Rumored To Be A Potential Running Mate For Gubernatorial Candidate Prospective Gubernatorial Candidate Norm Coleman, And Said She Was “Flattered” To Get The Attention. “In the glow of a glorious election-year spring, the thoughts of politically fixated Minnesotans turn to a quadrennial conundrum: Who will be the state's next lieutenant governor? […] St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman is said to have considered a number of candidates, including state Rep. Tim Pawlenty, R-Eagan, who was a gubernatorial candidate until Coleman got in the race; state Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who has strong ties to the anti-abortion movement; and Rep. Carol Molnau, R-Chaska, an assistant minority leader of the House. Coleman’s staff would not comment on the matter except to say the mayor likely will make his choice around the time of the Republican state convention on June 18. Pawlenty could not be reached for comment. Molnau said she has talked to Coleman about the job. ‘I’m interested, but it’s something my family and I will be deciding this weekend,’ Molnau said. Fischbach, who has only been in the Senate since 1995, said, ‘I’m flattered that anyone’s even talking about it.’” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/31/98]

1997: Fischbach Joined A Draft Group And Signed Onto A Letter Urging Then-Mayor Of St. Louis, Norm Coleman, To Run For Governor Of Minnesota

1997: Fischbach Signed Onto A Letter Urging Then-Mayor Of St. Louis, Norm Coleman, To Run For Governor Of Minnesota. “Wasting no time, key Republican Party leaders Wednesday launched an independent statewide campaign to draft newly reelected Mayor Norm Coleman of St. Paul for the party’s gubernatorial nomination in 1998. Coleman is uniquely situated ‘as a principled, electable conservative’ with a ‘proven ability to articulate our message and win the votes of independents and conservative DFLers,’ leaders of the draft group said in a letter dated Wednesday to 900 activists. […] Among a dozen other co-signers of the letter are: Marsie Leier, a leader of the conservative takeover of the party in the 1980s; Tad Jude, a former Hennepin County commissioner and a favorite of abortion opponents and social conservatives; Evie Axdahl, the other Minnesotan on the Republican National Committee; Peter Bell, a prominent conservative writer and commentator; Ben Whitney,
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former chairman of the drive to impose term limits in Minnesota; state Sens. Michelle Fischbach and Gen Olson, and state Rep. Eileen Tompkins.” [Star Tribune, 11/6/97]

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<th>1996: Fischbach Was Elected To The Minnesota State Senate</th>
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<td>1996: Fischbach Was Elected To The Minnesota State Senate After Her Predecessor Resigned Over A Shoplifting Scandal. “Republican Michelle Fischbach won Tuesday’s election to replace former Sen. Joe Bertram, the Paynesville DFLer who resigned after a shoplifting arrest and allegations of bribery. According to unofficial results, the Paynesville City Council member and novelty-store owner beat DFLer Lynn Schurman, a Rocori school board member and bakery owner, 5,800 to 5,457. ‘I’m pretty excited, and I think that our message of a strong conservative voice … was what the people wanted,’ Fischbach said late Tuesday. Fischbach said she planned to be at the Capitol today.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 2/7/96]</td>
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<th>1995: Fischbach Became The First Woman Elected To The Paynesville City Council</th>
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<td>1995: Fischbach Became The First Woman Elected To The Paynesville City Council. “The couple quickly dove into local and state politics. In 1995, Michelle Fischbach was the first woman elected to the Paynesville City Council.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]</td>
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<th>Prior To Running For Office, Fischbach Was A Pro-Life Influencer In Republican Circles</th>
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<td>Fischbach Was Executive Director Of The National Republican Pro-Life Committee. “I don’t know if it will even reach the floor,’ predicts Michelle Fischbach, executive director of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee. ‘The grass roots of the Republican party are pro-life. It’s necessary for pro-lifers to have that language.’” [Oregonian, 11/20/91]</td>
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| 1991: Fischbach Worried That Republicans Would Leave The Party If The Party “Desert[ed] The Pro-Lifers.” “Republican abortion-rights supporters are preparing a new attack on their party’s position against abortion. ‘We’ve been civil and silent, and while we may remain civil, we ain’t going to be silent anymore,’ says Ann Stone, head of Republicans for Choice. ‘You may see people leaving the party if Republicans desert the pro-lifers,’ says Michelle Fischbach of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee.” [USA Today, 9/27/91] |

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<th>Fischbach Said She Had Not Planned To Be An Elected Official</th>
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<td>Fischbach: “Growing Up, I Never Thought I Would Be An Elected Official… I Had No Life-Long Ambition. I Was Just Interested In Politics.” “Michelle Fischbach, Minnesota’s new lieutenant governor and also a Republican state senator, has politics flowing through her veins. Fischbach grew up in a politically active family in Woodbury, earned a college degree in political science and helped her husband run a political consulting company. But she never expected to become a high-ranking political leader, and she certainly didn’t anticipate getting caught in the middle of a constitutional tug-of-war. ‘Growing up, I never thought I would be an elected official,’ Fischbach said in an interview this past week. ‘I had no life-long ambition. I was just interested in politics, and I thought campaigns were fun,’ she said.” [Twin Cities Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]</td>
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<th>Campaign Finance</th>
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<td>2018: Fischbach And Her Running Mate Sent Out Fliers That Featured Unauthorized Photos Of Minneapolis Police Officers, Which May Have Violated Two City Policies</td>
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Fischbach. It includes a statement from Pawlenty expressing his tough-on-immigration stance: ‘Our state is wasting millions on benefits for those here illegally. That’s not right. I will enforce our laws and be a strong voice for hardworking Minnesotans.’” [Star Tribune, 8/4/18]

… But, The Flier May Have Violated City Policies By Using The Minneapolis Police Trademark Without Authorization, And Featuring Officers In A Political Advertisement

The Flier May Have Violated City Policies By Using The Minneapolis Police Trademark Without Authorization, And Featuring Officers In A Political Advertisement. “Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and several City Council members on Friday criticized a campaign mailer from Republican Tim Pawlenty that features several uniformed Minneapolis officers standing next to the candidate for governor in front of two squad cars. Frey said the mailer may have violated two city policies, calling it an unauthorized use of the Minneapolis police trademark and citing a prohibition on officers other than the union president or a designee appearing in a political advertisement.” [Star Tribune, 8/4/18]

2012: The Minnesota DFL Filed A Campaign Finance Complaint Against Fischbach And 15 Other Senators; Fischbach Was Ordered To Pay $75 For Her Violation

2012: Senate Republicans Used Taxpayer Money To Print Fliers That Were Distributed At Voting Precincts, Thereby Violating State Law

2012: Senate Republicans Used Taxpayer Money To Print 4,725 Fliers That Were Distributed At Voting Precincts, Thereby Violating State Law. “The complaint filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings alleges Senate Republicans used public funds to print partisan literature that was distributed at Republican precinct caucuses last week. State law prohibits using taxpayer money for any campaign purposes. The DFL Party filed the complaint early this week, but amended it on Wednesday after Sviggum, a former speaker of the House, told MPR that he had made a mistake. […] All told, 4,725 flyers were printed for a total cost of less than $50, according to MPR. “ [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/15/12]

In Response, The Minnesota DFL Filed A Campaign Finance Complaint Against Fischbach And The 15 Other Senators Who They Alleged Were Responsible For The Fliers

In Response, The Minnesota DFL Filed A Campaign Finance Complaint Against Fischbach And The 15 Other Senators Who They Alleged Were Responsible For The Fliers. “A DFL campaign finance complaint over pamphlets distributed at Republican precinct caucuses now includes caucus spokesman Steve Sviggum and 15 individual senators. […] ‘As Speaker Sviggum admitted yesterday, the Senate GOP crossed the legal line when they chose to print partisan campaign literature using state property and funds,’ DFL Party Chair Ken Martin wrote in a statement. ‘We believe this is a serious matter of public concern that deserves more than an apology.’ […] The Republican senators named in the complaint are Majority Leader Dave Senjem, Al DeKruif, Chris Gerlach, Joe Gimse, Gretchen Hoffman, Ben Kruse, Ted Lillie, Geoff Michel, Carla Nelson, Claire Robling, Ray Vandeveer, Pam Wolf, Michelle Fischbach, Doug Magnus and John Pederson.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/15/12]

Critics Alleged That The GOP Senators Got Away With Paying A Discount Rate For Printing $4,725 At A Cost Of $50

Critics Alleged That The GOP Senators Got Away With Paying A Discount Rate For Printing $4,725 At A Cost Of $50. “One thing apparently not worthy of an apology however was telling us the printing was only $50: ‘In all, 4,725 flyers were printed at a cost of less than $50 to taxpayers,’ as reported by MPR. Let’s pull out our calculators and just have a look (OK, now is when I get ungracious). $50 divided by 4725 is $.0106, rounded off. A bit over a penny apiece. Wow. Can I use that print shop? I can’t get basic black and white photocopies for less than maybe 10¢. Sweet deal the Senate GOP got! Well, it would have been sweet if they were paying for it.” [MN Progressive Project, 2/15/12]
**September 2012: After A Judge Ruled That Fischbach And The Other Senators Violated Campaign Finance Law, Fischbach Was Ordered To Pay $75**

“The Minnesota Senate Republican caucus and 12 of its members violated campaign finance laws by using taxpayer money to print partisan campaign literature in Senate offices, a panel of administrative judges has ruled. […] Those named in the complaint are Senate Majority Leader Dave Senjem, as well as state Sens. Al DeKruif of Madison Lake, Chris Gerlach of Apple Valley, Gretchen Hoffman of Vergas, Benjamin Kruse of Brooklyn Park, Ted Lillie of Woodbury, Claire Robling of Jordan, Ray Vandeveneer of Forest Lake, Pam Wolf of Spring Lake Park, Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, and John Pederson of St. Cloud, and GOP communications coordinator Steve Sviggum. […] The judges ruled all 12 senators must pay a fine of $75 each for their violations. Sviggum must pay $200.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 9/4/12]

**Republican Establishment**

**2020: GOP Leader Kevin McCarthy Endorsed Fischbach**

McCarthy Said Fischbach had His “Complete And Total Endorsement.” “MN-07: Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy on Tuesday tweeted his support for former Lt. Gov. Michelle Fischbach®, saying she has his ‘complete and total endorsement.’” [The Hotline, 10/24/19]

**1997: Fischbach Had Long-Standing Ties To D.C. Elites.**

**1997: When She Was A Relatively Low-Profile State Senator, Fischbach Held A Washington D.C. Fundraiser Hosted By High-Profile Republicans**


The Fundraiser Was Co-Hosted By Over Fifty Republicans, Including Bob Dole, Bill Brock, Rod Grams, And Vin Weber. “The list of hosts for a Washington fund-raiser this week read like a who’s who of Republican politics: former Sen. Bob Dole, former Republican National Committee Chair Bill Brock, Minnesota Sen. Rod Grams and former Minnesota Rep. Vin Weber. Big guns such as these usually appear at galas for well-known candidates, not relative political unknowns such as Minnesota state Sen. Michelle Fischbach. But Fischbach, a second-term legislator from Paynesville, was the honored guest Monday evening - prompting speculation that GOP kingmakers might have bigger things in mind for her. Despite the fancy invitation listing more than 50 co-hosts, the reception in a small room at an upscale Washington apartment building was modest. Of the big-name hosts, only Weber, an old family friend, made an appearance. However, Dole later phoned to wish her well and sent a $100 contribution, the legal maximum in Minnesota.” [Star Tribune, 11/27/97]

The Event Was Originally Planned As A Holiday Party, But Later Turned Into A Fundraiser. “Fischbach said that the event was originally planned as a holiday reunion with old friends, but that she and her husband, Scott, an aide to Dole’s 1996 presidential campaign, decided to turn it into a fund-raiser and get some publicity.” [Star Tribune, 11/26/97]

Fischbach Declined To State How Much Money Was Raised At The Fundraiser. “Fischbach declined to say how much money was raised from the two to three dozen people who attended.” [Star Tribune, 11/26/97]

**Minnesota Politics**

**2010: Fischbach And Minnesota Republicans Accused The Minnesota DFL Of Anti-Catholic Bias**
2010: The DFL Issued Fliers Attacking A Republican Candidate That Depicted A Catholic Priest And An Angel Carrying Signs That Read “Ignore The Poor” And “Blessed Are The Rich,” Respectively

For politicians, flags and babies used to be the accessories of a successful campaign. During the 2010 election cycle, the cross is playing a big role, too. One episode bubbled over Wednesday, prompting a round of denunciations and defenses of Democratic-Farmer-Labor party campaign fliers that incorporate religious imagery to attack a Republican challenger in a district covering Bloomington and Burnsville. ‘If the Republican Party of Minnesota sent something out like that, I would apologize,’ said Tony Sutton, chairman of the Republican Party of Minnesota. In one flier, what appears to be a Bible-toting Catholic priest wears a button that reads, ‘Ignore the Poor.’ In another, an angel pictured in stained glass carries a banner that reads, ‘Blessed are the Rich.’” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 10/27/10]

Fischbach Said Slammed The DFL For The Fliers, Which She Said Were “Completely Unprecedented”

Minnesota Republicans Accused The DFL Of Anti-Catholic Bias, And Fischbach Said The Fliers Were “Completely Unprecedented.” “Sen. Amy Koch of Buffalo said the fliers are anti-Catholic, ‘deeply offensive’ and have no place in Minnesota politics. Sen. Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville said they were ‘completely unprecedented’ and that ‘Mark Dayton should be ashamed of his party.’” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 10/27/10]

Conservative Squad

Fischbach Was Part Of A “Conservative Squad” Of Four White Women Running For Congress

Dec. 2019: Mace Was A Part Of “Conservative Squad,” A Joint Fundraising Committee Along With Republican Congressional Candidates Jessica Taylor, Beth Van Duyne, And Nancy Mace

The “Conservative Squad” Tried To Present Itself As A Contrast To The Democratic “Squad” Of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, And Ayanna Pressley. “Four Republican women running for Congress have branded themselves as the ‘Conservative Squad,’ saying they’d be the conservative counterpart to the young female Democratic ‘squad’ members in Congress. […] Congressional candidates Jessica Taylor, Michelle Fischbach, Nancy Mace, and Beth Van Duyne appeared on Fox and Friends Thursday morning to present themselves as the GOP alternative to ‘The Squad’—or Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Rep, Ilhan Omar (D-MN), Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), and Rep. Rashida Talib (D-MI).” [Daily Beast, 12/12/19]

The Conservative Squad Was Badly Outraised By The Original Democratic “Squad”

February 2020: The Conservative Squad Raised An Average Of $267,000 Each During Q4 Of 2019, While The Democratic Squad Raised An Average Of $724,000. “The four Republican women branding themselves as the ‘Conservative Squad’ have not kept fundraising pace with their more prominent progressive counterparts. In a
Dec. 12 Fox and Friends segment, GOP House candidates Jessica Taylor of Alabama, Michelle Fischbach of Minnesota, Nancy Mace of South Carolina, and Beth Van Duyne of Texas branded themselves as the GOP’s answer to the ‘socialist’ squad of freshmen House Democrats. The group called out by name the progressive Squad of Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib as it promised to tap into a new base of young donors. But the new Squad seems to be beset by the same fundraising struggles that are plaguing Republicans nationwide. The four raised an average of $267,000 in the last quarter of 2019, with an average of $380,000 cash on hand. Ocasio-Cortez et al averaged $724,000 in the same time, ending the year with an average of $1.5 million cash on hand.” [National Journal, 2/3/20]
**Significant Findings**

- Fischbach cost Minnesota nearly $150,000 in legal fees when she refused to resign from her state senate seat after becoming Lt. Governor in 2018.

  - In 2018, Fischbach became Lt. Governor when Tina Smith was appointed to United States Senate after Al Franken resigned.

  - A lawsuit was filed against Fischbach alleging she had violated the state’s constitution by holding multiple posts. Fischbach refused to resign from the State Senate and some speculated it was because if she was removed it could cause Republicans to lose their majority.

  - The lawsuit was dismissed, but it cost Minnesota taxpayers more than $150,000 in legal fees.

- In 2012, as chair of the Ethics Committee, Fischbach decided to heavily constrict the scope of an investigation into her Republican colleague Geoff Michel, deputy Senate Majority Leader at the time.

  - The complaint alleged that Michel failed to act on his knowledge that Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch was having an affair with staffer, Michael Brodkob. Koch resigned due to the improper relationship.

  - A year later, leaked recordings showed Fischbach had conversations with the said staffer, who was eventually fired. The recordings were laced with profanity, and showed Fischbach telling the staffer that she disagreed with the manner in which he was fired, even though she publicly defended his firing.

- In 2011, when she served on the Senate Ethics Committee, Fischbach voted to protect a Republican lawmaker who was implicated in pay-for-play scandal.

- In 2007, Scott Fischbach, the Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, a pro-life group in Minnesota, was accused of engaging in pay-for-play when Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life was issuing endorsements.

  - Scott Fischbach ran a consulting firm while serving on the board of Mississippi Right To Life, a powerful pro-life group that endorsed Charlie Ross over Phil Bryant in Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor Election.

  - Campaign finance records showed that Ross only got the endorsement after paying thousands of dollars to Scott’s consulting firm, raising questions about a possible quid pro quo.

  - A March 2007 memo from Scott Fischbach to Bryant showed Fischbach telling Bryant he wanted to “do [his] part to ensure your victory,” but Fischbach insisted there was “no quid pro quo.”

- In 2001, Scott Fischbach’s position as the Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, was criticized by pro-choice activists because Michelle was a state legislator, sparking concerns about conflicts of interest.
# Fischbach’s Refusal To Vacate Her State Senate Seat

**2017: Despite Ascending To The Role Of Lieutenant Governor, Fischbach Tried To Hold Onto Her Senate Seat Because Senate Republicans Held A One Vote Majority In The Legislature**

2017: Despite ascending to the role of Lieutenant Governor, Fischbach tried to hold onto her Senate seat because Senate Republicans held a one vote majority in the Legislature. “That automatic ascension of Fischbach created awkwardness, not only because she and Dayton are of opposite parties, but also because Republicans clung to a one-vote majority in the Senate. As such, Fischbach refused to take the oath as lieutenant governor, referring to herself only as ‘acting lieutenant governor. She also refused to resign her Senate seat, a maneuver that drew a pair of lawsuits from Democrats who alleged that was a violation of the state Constitution.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 5/31/18]

**2017: Fischbach Cost Minnesota Nearly $150,000 In Legal Fees Because She Wanted To Serve As Both The Lt. Governor And In The State Senate**

Fischbach became Lt. Governor after Al Franken’s resignation and refused to give up her Senate seat, because at the time, her removal could have cost Republicans control.

Fischbach became Lt. Governor after Al Franken’s resignation and refused to give up her Senate seat. “Democrat Al Franken, accused of sexual misconduct, resigned from the U.S. Senate on Jan. 2. Dayton appointed DFL Lt. Gov. Tina Smith to replace him. Smith resigned from her state office. […] Under the Minnesota Constitution, the president of the Senate, Fischbach automatically became lieutenant governor. She opts to retain her Senate seat, despite a constitutional provision barring legislators from holding other state offices” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

At the time, if Fischbach was removed from her Senate seat Republicans could have lost control of their slim majority. “Republicans currently hold a 34-32 Senate majority with one vacant seat. If Fischbach is removed from her seat, the GOP could lose control of the chamber.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

A lawsuit was filed alleging that Fischbach was in violation of the Constitution by holding multiple posts, and should be barred from exercising her Senate power.

A lawsuit was filed alleging that Fischbach was in violation of the Constitution by holding multiple posts, and should be barred from exercising her Senate power. “But a past state Supreme Court ruling allows her to occupy both posts, she and Senate Republicans counter. A DFL voter filed a lawsuit asserting Fischbach is violating the state constitution and should be barred from exercising her Senate powers. Her fate is in the courts hands” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1/20/18]

The first lawsuit against Fischbach was dismissed because the legislative session had not started and thereby Fischbach had not assumed two roles yet. “An initial lawsuit filed by Democratic constituent Destiny Dusosky was dismissed earlier this year, in large part because it was filed before the Legislature resumed its session - and thus before Fischbach had carried out both roles. Dusosky followed up with a second challenge in April. That case was awaiting a hearing scheduled for June 5.” [Canadian Press, 5/25/18]


Fischbach’s court battle cost Minnesota tax payers nearly $150,000
Fischbach’s Court Battle Cost Minnesota Tax Payers Nearly $150,000. “Minnesota taxpayers will pick up the tab for nearly $150,000 in legal fees in a court fight over the lieutenant governor’s seat.” [CBS Minnesota, 12/11/18]

A Majority Of Minnesotans Disagreed With Fischbach’s Decision To Hold Two Posts Simultaneously

2018: 75.5% Of Minnesotans Said Fischbach Should Not Be Able To Serve In The Minnesota Senate While Simultaneously Being Lieutenant Governor. “Should Michelle Fischbach be able to serve in the Minnesota Senate while being Minnesota lieutenant governor? 19.7% Yes 75.5% No 4.8% I don’t know” [Hutchinson Leader, 1/3/18]

Investigation Of Firing of Michael Brodkorb

2013: Secret Profanity-Laced Recordings Showed Fischbach Had Opposed Michael Brodkorb’s Firing For Involvement In An Affair, Even Though She Publicly Defended it

2012: Staffer Michael Brodkorb Was Fired For Having An Affair With Former Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch

2012: Staffer Michael Brodkorb Was Fired For Having An Affair With Former Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch. “Senate DFLers on Monday, March 19, filed an ethics complaint against Sen. Geoff Michel, saying he failed to take appropriate action when he was informed that former Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch was having an affair with a subordinate. Michael Brodkorb says he was fired in December because of his affair with Koch, adding that he was treated differently from other workers involved with legislators.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 3/18/12]

Secret Profanity-Laced Recordings From 2011 Showed Fischbach Had Problems With The Manner In Which Brodkorb Was Fired

2011: Michael Brodkorb Secretly Recorded Conversations That He Had With Michelle Fischbach While His Affair With Koch Was Unraveling. “The 2011 recordings made by Brodkorb without Fischbach’s knowledge are part of the high-profile lawsuit he filed after revelations of his romantic relationship with Koch rocked the Capitol, leading to her resignation as majority leader and his firing. The lawsuit claims he was improperly fired, in part because previous affairs involving female staffers and male politicians did not result in any dismissals. The suit, scheduled for trial next summer, has already cost state taxpayers more than $200,000 in legal fees.” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]

Fischbach Used Expletives To Denounce Senators’ Efforts To Fire Brodkorb. “Once Koch was no longer able to offer protection, Brodkorb said, the other senators saw an opportunity to ‘maximize the pain’ and ultimately take him out. ‘They wanted to put a [expletive] bullet in my head,’ Brodkorb said in the recording. ‘They are so [expletive] righteous,’ Fischbach replied.” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]

The Recordings Indicated That Other Staffers Were Also Having Salacious Affairs With Legislators. “The profanity-laced conversations between Brodkorb and Fischbach were obtained by the Star Tribune from a source who requested anonymity and who is not directly part of the lawsuit. Brodkorb and Fischbach, in their conversation on the tape, alluded to similar romantic relationships in the Capitol where the employee was not fired. ‘I think there has been an incredible double standard here,’ Fischbach said in the recording. Koch, who resigned her leadership position after other senators confronted her about the affair, told the Star Tribune last week that she wishes Fischbach had spoken out at the time about her displeasure over the way events unfolded.” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]
Fischbach Claimed That The Recordings Were Being Misrepresented, As She Was Only Trying To Console Brodkorb, Who She Considered A Friend. “Fischbach, who declined to be interviewed about the tapes, said in a statement that she was only trying to console someone she considered a friend. “My comments to Michael Brodkorb were made as a friend trying to be supportive of someone in a difficult situation, who was losing his job and possibly losing his family,” the Paynesville Republican said in a statement. “I was not speaking on behalf of the Senate, but only talking to someone who I then thought of as a friend in need of emotional support and who I didn’t think would secretly record the call.”” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]

Fischbach Told Brodkorb To Keep Quiet About Their Conversation

Fischbach Said She Was “Not Going To Ask [Brodkorb] To Lie” But Told Him Not To Tell Anyone They Had Spoken. “Toward the end of the roughly 30-minute conversation, Brodkorb said he wanted his job back and pressed Fishbach to agree with him. Fischbach grew reserved. She asked Brodkorb to never mention that they had discussed his firing. “I am not asking you to lie, but I’d ask you not indicate to anybody that you and I have talked,’ she said. ‘I won’t,’ Brodkorb said.” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]

2013: Fischbach Said That She Now Believed Brodkorb’s Firing Was Appropriate

2013: Fischbach Said That She Now Believed Brodkorb’s Firing Was Appropriate. “Fischbach now says she believes her colleagues had every right to fire Brodkorb as they did. ‘I now understand that staff members can be lawfully discharged under such circumstances,’ she said in the statement.” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]

The Recordings Of The Conversations Between Fischbach And Brodkorb Cost The State More Than $200,000 In Legal Fees

Fischbach’s Recordings Were Part Of A Lawsuit That Cost The State More Than $200,000 In Legal Fees. “The 2011 recordings made by Brodkorb without Fischbach’s knowledge are part of the high-profile lawsuit he filed after revelations of his romantic relationship with Koch rocked the Capitol, leading to her resignation as majority leader and his firing. The lawsuit claims he was improperly fired, in part because previous affairs involving female staffers and male politicians did not result in any dismissals. The suit, scheduled for trial next summer, has already cost state taxpayers more than $200,000 in legal fees.” [Star Tribune, 6/23/13]

2012: As Chair Of The Ethics Committee, Fischbach Was Criticized For How She Handled An Investigation Into Her Republican Colleagues’ Handling Of The Affair

2012: GOP Sen. Geoff Michel Was Hit With An Ethics Complaint For Failing To Take Appropriate Action After He Found Out Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch Was Having An Affair With A Staffer

2012: Staffer Michael Brodkorb Was Fired For Having An Affair With Former Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch. “Senate DFLers on Monday, March 19, filed an ethics complaint against Sen. Geoff Michel, saying he failed to take appropriate action when he was informed that former Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch was having an affair with a subordinate. Michael Brodkorb says he was fired in December because of his affair with Koch, adding that he was treated differently from other workers involved with legislators.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 3/18/12]

GOP Sen. Geoff Michel Received An Ethics Complaint For Staying Silent About The Affair Between Brodkorb And Koch, Even Though He Knew About It Before It Was Public Knowledge. “His attorneys filed a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission last week. The ethics complaint was filed by Sen. Sandy Pappas, DFL-St. Paul. It states Michel, who was deputy Senate majority leader at the time, ‘brought the Senate into dishonor and disrepute’ by waiting to take action on the allegations until public disclosure was imminent. Michel also betrayed the public’s trust by making false and misleading statements
about when he became aware of the affair, Pappas said. Michel said in a statement that the complaint has nothing to do with ethics. It’s about ‘politics and payback’ and the DFL looking for a ‘few more headlines,’ he said. The Edina Republican said he’s asked for an immediate hearing to resolve the matter.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 3/18/12]

As Chair Of The Ethics Committee, Fischbach Heavily Limited The Scope Of Permissible Questioning During The Inquiry Into Michel

As Chair Of The Ethics Committee, Fischbach Ruled That Questions About When Precisely Michel Knew About The Affair Were Out Of Bounds, Since There Was Ongoing Litigation Surrounding The Matter. “Flanked by almost the entire GOP caucus, Sen. Geoff Michel vigorously defended his handling of the Amy Koch-Michael Brodkorb scandal at a hearing before the Senate ethics panel on Friday afternoon. The nearly three-hour inquiry was prompted by a complaint filed by Sen. Sandy Pappas accusing Michel of lying to the public and failing to take swift action upon learning that Koch was involved in an inappropriate relationship with a Senate employee. […] Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, chair of the Subcommittee on Ethical Conduct, made it clear from the outset of the hearing that many areas would be outside the bounds of allowable questioning because of pending litigation by Brodkorb. She shut down questions from Pappas dealing with exactly who was aware of the inappropriate relationships.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 3/23/12]

Fischbach Said Her “Hands Were Tied” Due To The Ongoing Litigation. “No new details came to light. Ethics Committee Chairwoman Michelle Fischbach, a Republican, repeatedly warned committee members against delving too far into the affair and the fallout due to concern it would give Brodkorb ammunition in court. ‘Our hands are tied because of pending litigation,’ Fischbach said.” [Associated Press, 3/23/12]

Fischbach’s Critics Were Frustrated With Her Efforts To Black Lines Of Inquiry Into The Affair

Without Providing Substantial Explanation, Fischbach Postponed The Michel Hearing

March 2012: Fischbach “Temporarily Postponed” The Michel Hearing. “It’s unclear when, or if, a Minnesota Senate hearing will reconvene on an ethics complaint against Republican Sen. Geoff Michel of Edina. After a 2-1/2-hour hearing Friday, March 23, a Senate ethics panel deadlocked over a DFL senator’s complaint that Michel didn’t take appropriate action when he was told former Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch was having an affair with a staffer. They were supposed to come back late Friday evening, but the two Republican members never showed up. On Tuesday, Senate President Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said she has ‘temporarily postponed’ the hearing on advice of counsel. ‘There were certain places we should not or could not go during that committee hearing,’ Fischbach said on the Senate floor Tuesday. ‘Obviously, this situation is unprecedented, and it certainly needs to be carefully handled.’” [Pioneer Press, 3/28/12]

The Committee Was In Deadlock Over The Investigation After Fischbach And The Other Republican On The Committee Voted To Halt The Investigation

The Committee Was In Deadlock Over The Investigation After Fischbach And The Other Republican On The Committee Voted To Halt The Investigation. “A DFL complaint alleges Michel lied to the press, and therefore the public, last year in talking about the timing of when he discovered the affair between former Majority
Leader Amy Koch and former staffer Michael Brodkorb. DFLer Sandy Pappas wants Michel to publicly apologize, much like former DFL Majority Leader Dean Johnson was forced to do in 2006 after an ethics complaint about statements he made. The two Republicans on the committee—chair Sen. Michelle Fischbach and Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen—have voted that there is no probable cause for the complaint and no reason to investigate further. The committee’s two Democrats—Sen. Kathy Sheran and Sen. John Harrington—have voted the opposite.” [Hot Dish Politics, 4/18/12]

**Pay-To-Play**

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<th>2011: Fischbach Voted To Protect A Republican Lawmaker Who Was Implicated In A Pay-To-Play Scandal</th>
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**2011: GOP Sen. Scott Newman’s Office Refused To Meet With A Group Who Supported His Opponent In The Previous Campaign Cycle, Which Led DFLers To Call For An Investigation Into The Matter**

2011: Newman’s Legislative Aide Sent An Email Indicating That The Senator Would Not Meet With A Group That Supported Newman’s Opponent In The Previous Campaign Cycle. “At issue was an email sent out by Newman’s legislative aid last month. ‘Unfortunately, Senator Newman will not see any organizations that donated to/supported his opponent Hal Kimball,’ the email read. ‘After some careful checking, I discovered that the MNA had donated to Kimball’s campaign.’” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/10/11]

Senate DFLers Called For An Investigation Into Newman And His Aide, Pointing Out That His Office Violated A Senate Rule Prohibiting Senators From Limiting Access To Political Contributors. “Senate DFLers are seeking an ethics investigation on Republican Sen. Scott Newman of Hutchinson whose legislative assistant sent an email to the Minnesota Nurses Association stating that he would not meet with groups who backed his opponent, Hal Kimball. The DFLers claim that Newman violated Senate Rule 56.3, which prohibits senators from limiting access only to those who have made political contributions. […] Pappas and the DFL sent a letter to Senate President Michelle Fischbach on Thursday requesting an investigation.” [Minnesota Independent, 1/27/11]

**As A Member Of The Ethics Committee, Fischbach Voted Against Opening An Investigation Into Newman**

Upon Receiving The Complaint That DFLers Filed Against Newman, Fischbach Voted Against Opening An Investigation. “The senate ethics panel voted to dismiss the complaint in a closed-door session following the public hearing. The participants: DFL Sens. Linda Scheid (Brooklyn Park) and Kathy Sheran (Mankato), GOP Sens. Michelle Fischbach (Paynesville) and Bill Ingebrigtsen (Alexandria). After the hearing, Newman expressed relief that the panel had dismissed the matter. ‘At this point, to be real honest, I need to get back to work,’ he said.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/10/11]

**Despite Promising That The Closed-Door Session To Vote On The Newman Investigation Would Be Recorded, But The Tape That Was Supposed To Contain The Audio Recording Was Blank**

Despite Promising That The Closed-Door Session To Vote On The Newman Investigation Would Be Recorded, But The Tape That Was Supposed To Contain The Audio Recording Was Blank. “Senate President Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, assured reporters and members of the public before the panel went behind closed doors to decide on the complaint, that the session would be recorded. Those deliberations led to the charge against Newman being dismissed and no investigation. The four-member bipartisan committee also passed a resolution to make the tape of the session public. But somehow when the senate went to listen to the tape later it was blank, according to Michael Brodkorb, communications director for the Republican caucus and deputy chair of the state party. He said this morning they don’t know how the session wasn’t recorded.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 2/10/11]
**2007: Scott Fischbach Was Accused Of Engaging In Pay-For-Play When Issuing Endorsements**

**2007: Scott Fischbach Ran A Consulting Firm While Serving On The Board Of Mississippi Right To Life, A Group Powerful Group That Endorsed Charlie Ross Over Phil Bryant In Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor Election**

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**A March 2007 Memo From Fischbach To Bryant Showed Fischbach Telling Bryant He Wanted To “Do [His] Part To Ensure Your Victory;” Fischbach Said There Was “No Quid Pro Quo.”** “Fischbach concurred in that assessment and said he did not participate in the choice of Ross for the endorsement but that after meeting Ross, ‘I decided I wanted to go with him.’ But a March 10, 2007, memo from Fischbach to Bryant paints a different picture. In that memo, which Fischbach confirmed, he said: ‘This race is going to be decided in the next 120 days and I want to do my part to ensure your victory.’ Bryant didn’t hire him. Fischbach said that despite his offer to Bryant, his hiring by Ross had nothing to do with Ross getting the endorsement. ‘It’s not like I said to Phil, hire me and you’ll get the endorsement,’ said Fischbach. ‘I met with both of them. I liked Phil, he’s pro-life, but I decided I wanted to go with Charlie. There was no quid pro quo, absolutely none.’” [Greenwood Commonwealth, Sid Salter Op-Ed, 7/18/07]

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PAC’s chairperson Barbara Whitehead confirmed that fact to this writer in a July interview when she said that the group has in prior elections endorsed Bryant, Franks and Ross. Whitehead said: ‘All three candidates are pro-life. That will be on our Web site along with the information on all the other candidates that we sent questionnaires to. Jamie Franks and Charlie Ross both have pro-life voting records for these last four years. ‘Phil Bryant did in the past when he was in the Legislature. All three of them have been endorsed by the PAC. This makes them all equal.’ […] Now, in the general election, Mississippi Right to Life has endorsed Republicans Haley Barbour for governor, Bryant for lieutenant governor and Democratic House Speaker Billy McCoy for re-election to his House district. In July, with Bryant, Franks and Ross having ‘equal’ pro-life records according to Mississippi Right to Life, Ross was the choice. In October, now it’s Bryant. Mississippi Right to Life is a credible organization that is to be respected. But its political endorsement process lacks credibility.” [Clarion-Ledger, Sid Salter Op-Ed, 10/3/07]

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2007: Fischbach’s Husband Worked For A Candidate That Received The Endorsement Of The Mississippi Right To Life, While Fischbach Was On The Board Of The Organization

Fischbach’s Husband Was Hired By Then-Mississippi State Senator Charlie Ross As A Consultant For His Bid For Lieutenant Governor And Was Paid Over $7,000. “State Sen. Charlie Ross of Brandon got some recent headlines and some political bragging rights out of a key endorsement in his Republican lieutenant governor’s primary showdown with State Auditor Phil Bryant. […] Earlier this month, the Ross campaign reported $7,261 in total payments to Fischbach’s Coalition Productions firm. Ross said he hired Fischbach because ‘he’s worked in the past for Haley Barbour, Amy Tuck, Kirk Fordice and a lot of other successful Republican candidates.’” [Greenwood Commonwealth, 7/18/07]

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### 2001: Fischbach’s Husband Led Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, And His Appointment Was Criticized By Pro-Choice Activists Because Of A Conflict Of Interest

Fischbach’s Husband Led Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life. “Her husband, Scott Fischbach, leads the state’s leading anti-abortion activist group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/29/12]

Pro-Choice Activists Criticized Fischbach’s Husband’s Appointment To Executive Director Of The Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Because He Would Lobby While Fischbach Was A Legislator. “While Central Minnesota MCCL members seemed to like the choice of Scott Fischbach as the new executive director, at least a few abortion-rights advocates were less than thrilled. ‘I am shocked,’ said Jane Olsen, director of the Women’s Center at St. Cloud State University. ‘I am shocked because Michelle is a legislator and now her husband is going to be a lobbyist. And basically, the only issues she addresses at the Legislature are anti-abortion issues.’ […] ‘It just seems like a conflict of interest and it seems inappropriate,’” Olsen said.” [St. Cloud Times, 6/7/01]

### 2020: While She Was A State Legislator, Michelle Oversaw An Essay Writing Contest For National Right To Life, Scott’s Group

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**Significant Findings**

- **In 1994,** Fischbach’s husband, Scott Fischbach, ran for Congress in MN-02. His Republican primary opponents accused him of running a campaign filled with lies and misinformation, and he publicly touted an endorsement from Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, even though the group never publicly endorsed him.

- Scott was the Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, a pro-life group in Minnesota. Michelle served on the board of the group while she was a state legislator, sparking concerns about conflicts of interest.

- **In 2007,** Scott was accused of engaging in pay-for-play when Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life was issuing endorsements.

  - Scott Fischbach ran a consulting firm while serving on the board of Mississippi Right To Life, a powerful pro-life group that endorsed Charlie Ross over Phil Bryant in Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor Election.

  - Campaign finance records showed that Ross only got the endorsement after paying thousands of dollars to Scott’s consulting firm, raising questions about a possible quid pro quo.

  - A March 2007 memo from Scott Fischbach to Bryant showed Fischbach telling Bryant he wanted to “do [his] part to ensure your victory,” but Fischbach insisted there was “no quid pro quo.”

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2011: Scott Threatened Republican Leaders In Minnesota For Failing To Ban Abortion, Even Though His Wife Was Senate President At The Time

2011: Scott’s Pro-Life Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Tacitly Threatened Members Of GOP Leadership For Failing To Ban Abortion In Minnesota

2011: Scott’s Pro-Life Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Said It Would Have To “Address” The Failure Of Minnesota’s Republican Leaders To Ban Abortion As Part Of A Budget Agreement. “A budget agreement being hammered out by Gov. Mark Dayton and Republicans in the Minnesota Legislature aimed at ending a state government shutdown came under fire from the states largest anti-abortion group over the weekend. Dayton and Republicans made an agreement late last week to resolve Minnesota’s budget impasse, in part by avoiding controversial social issues such as abortion and focusing on fiscal matters. A representative for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life told reporters that he now questions the pro-life credentials of GOP leaders and told Republican legislators to vote no on any budget agreement that does not ban abortion. In a veiled threat to Republicans, MCCLs Scott Fischbach told Minnesota Public Radio that his group will be taking a second look at Republican leaders. ‘We had operated under the assumption that we had pro-life leadership in both the House and the Senate. I think that there are many pro-lifers that are devastated now to the point of questioning some of that leadership, he said. And were going to have to address that down the road.’” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

…But, Michelle Was A Member Of Republican Leadership At The Time

2011: Michelle Fischbach Was President Of The Minnesota Senate. “Fischbach’s wife is one of those in leadership. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, is the president of the Minnesota Senate.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

    Scott Tried To Shift The Blame Away From Michelle And Onto Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch, Nothing That His Wife Was Not A Part Of Budget Negotiations. “SOCIAL ISSUES- IT’S ALL RELATIVE: MPR posted an interesting piece positing that the relationship between husband Scott Fischbach, head of MCCL and wife Michelle Fischbach, who is president of the Senate, could cause some problems in the passage of the budget bills. Social issues continue to put the heat on the GOP Senate caucus, it seems. MCCL’S Fischbach puts the finger on Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch for taking the abortion debate off the table, noting that his wife was not involved in budget negations.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

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2006: Scott Arranged For Michelle To Be On “Blow Out,” A Reality Television Show About Hairdressing, After Michelle Told Him It Would Be “So Cool” To Appear On The Show

2006: Scott Arranged For Michelle To Be On The Reality Show “Blow Out,” After Michelle Told Him It Would Be “So Cool” To Appear On The Show. “Speaking of extreme makeovers, Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, is still sporting a $700 cut, style and tint job she received in February from Beverly Hills hairdresser Jonathan Antin for the Bravo TV reality show ‘Blow Out.’ A fan of the show, Fischbach recently told her husband, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life executive director Scott Fischbach, that it would be ‘so cool’ to appear on it. So he set it up for the senator’s 40th birthday. ‘I was there for four hours,’ she recalled. ‘Jonathan put some blond and red highlights in to cover up the very little bit of gray I’ve got, but it’s pretty close to my natural color. He did a wonderful job.’ The show airs on May 2.” [Star Tribune, 4/23/06]

Blow Out Was A Reality Television Show About A Hairdresser In Beverly Hills. “Follows the trials and tribulations of hairdresser Jonathan Antin as he struggles to open his new Beverly Hills hair salon on time and under budget, and then tries to keep the operation running smoothly.” [IMDB, Blow Out, accessed 1/16/20]

1994: Scott Ran For Congress In MN-02

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1994: Fischbach Ran For Congress In MN-02, And His Republican Primary Opponents Accused Him Of Running A Campaign Rife With Lies And Misinformation. “Scott Fischbach, a 28-year-old political unknown who moved back to Minnesota last year to run for Congress, is on the verge of pulling off a major coup by getting the Independent-Republican endorsement for the Second District congressional seat. […] Fischbach’s opponents, state Rep. Tom Workman from Chanhassen and Redwood Falls Mayor Gary Revier, say their campaigns have been victimized by distortions and lies, whether intentional or not. And both point accusing fingers at Quist and Fischbach supporters.” [Star Tribune, 4/5/94]

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‘Fischbach has a fund-raising letter out claiming that he has the MCCL’s endorsement, although the MCCL hasn’t put anything out saying that,’ Workman said. ‘MCCL ran a picture of him taken at a prolife rally in January and described him as a candidate. I was at that same rally, and at that time I was the only announced candidate. So it’s pretty clear what MCCL is doing.’ Schwietz could not be reached for comment at her home or office.” [Star Tribune, 4/5/94]

**Scott’s Campaign Focused Heavily On Abortion Issues, But Also Mentioned Crime, Education, And Health Care**

Scott’s Campaign Focused Heavily On Abortion Issues, But Also Mentioned Crime, Education, And Health Care. “Fischbach is quick to challenge the notion that abortion dominates his legislative agenda. His campaign materials talk about the problems of rural Minnesota. The Second District is one of the most rural in the country, stretching from the South Dakota border to the fringes of Minneapolis’ western suburbs. He also mentions crime, education and health care, and says he is developing detailed position papers on those issues. ‘I obviously care a great deal about abortions,’ he said, ‘but that’s just one of many issues that I am concerned about.’” [Star Tribune, 4/5/94]

**Scott Fischbach Was A Former Aide To Bob Dole**

Scott Fischbach Was A Former Aide To Bob Dole During His 1996 Presidential Campaign. “Fischbach said that the event was originally planned as a holiday reunion with old friends, but that she and her husband, Scott, an aide to Dole’s 1996 presidential campaign, decided to turn it into a fund-raiser and get some publicity.” [Star Tribune, 11/26/97]

**Dick Cheney**

**2004: Fischbach Praised Dick Cheney For Being A Vice President Who Was More Than Just A “Figurehead”**

2004: Fischbach Praised Dick Cheney For Being A Vice President Who Was More Than Just A “Figurehead.” “Michelle Fischbach, a Republican delegate from Paynesville, Minn., said Cheney ‘has a proven track record.’ ‘He’s not just a figurehead like previous vice presidents,’ she said. ‘He has a role in the Bush administration.’” [Gannett News Service, 8/31/04]

**George W. Bush**

**2004: Fischbach Gave An Introductory Speech For Bush During His Visit To Minnesota, And Said Her Community Was “Pro-Bush”**

2004: Fischbach Gave An Introductory Speech For Bush During His Visit To Minnesota, And Said Her Community Was “Pro-Bush.” “Bush’s references to ‘the culture of life’ and to the role of marriage—allusions to his opposition to abortion and support for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage—produced a huge cheer in St. Cloud, a culturally conservative bastion. A leader of anti-abortion forces at the Minnesota Legislature, state Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, set the tone in her introductory speech. ‘We are the heart and soul of Minnesota and conservative Midwest values,’ Fischbach said. ‘We are pro-life, pro-marriage, pro-family and we are pro-Bush.’” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 9/17/04]
Donald Trump

**Significant Findings**

✓ When asked where she disagreed with Donald Trump, Fischbach could not identify any areas of disagreement whatsoever.

✓ Trump said Fischbach was “great.”

✓ Fischbach attacked Collin Peterson for “failing to take a stand” against impeachment, even though Peterson voted against impeachment and criticized Democratic leadership during the impeachment process.

✓ Fischbach said Trump’s impeachment was “really good for the Republican Party” because it would unify the party behind Trump.

**Support**

**Fischbach Could Not Identify Any Areas Where She Disagreed With Trump**

Fischbach Could Not Identify Any Areas Where She Disagreed With Trump. “Fischbach didn’t identify any areas where she disagrees with Trump. ‘Off the top of my head I can’t think of one at this point,’ she said. ‘But certainly, my job would be to represent the people of the 7th District.’” [MPR News, 9/3/19]

**Trump Said Fischbach Was “Great”**

Trump Said That Fischbach “Has Been So Great.” “‘She has been so great,’ Trump said of Fischbach at his rally in Duluth. ‘She’s got a big race coming along. It’s going to be so great.’” [Washington Post, 6/21/18]

**Impeachment**

**Fischbach Attacked Collin Peterson For “Failing To Take A Stand” Against Impeachment, Even Though Peterson Voted Against Impeachment And Slammed His Fellow Democrats For It**

Fischbach Attacked Peterson For “Failing To Take A Stand Against Nancy Pelosi’s Partisan Impeachment Sham” And “Quietly Voting ‘No’ From [His] Seat.” “@collinpeterson has more seniority than 95% of his colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives, yet he chose not to use it to take a stand against Nancy Pelosi’s partisan #ImpeachmentSham... #MN07 ... It’s painfully obvious that @collinpeterson has been in Washington for too long, become complacent in its dysfunction, and at times aids it, like when he enabled this political witch hunt to continue by giving Speaker Pelosi the gavel... #MN07... Quietly voting ‘no’ from your seat is a lot easier than taking a stand against the Trump-hating radicals in one’s party, who are obsessed with undoing the will of the American people, and removing a duly-elected @POTUS from office... #MN07... Western Minnesotans support President @realDonaldTrump and are sick and tired of @collinpeterson voting for Speaker Pelosi, as he has for the past two decades... #MN07... Western Minnesota is ready for a new conservative voice who will stand against the Democrat’s political witch hunt to #ImpeachAndRemove President Trump. #MN07 #Trump2020” [Twitter, Michelle Fischbach, 12/18/19]
Michelle Fischbach (@FischbachMN7 · Dec 18, 2019)
@collinpetersen has more seniority than 95% of his colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives, yet he chose not to use it to take a stand against Nancy Pelosi’s partisan #impeachmentSham... #MN07

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8:40 PM · Dec 18, 2019 · Twitter Web App

[Twitter, Michelle Fischbach, 12/18/19]

Peterson Voted Against Impeachment And Criticized Democrats, Calling Impeachment A “Mistake” And Saying Democrats Had Failed To Make A Successful Case To The Public. “I’m not a lawyer and am not sure what ‘high crimes and misdemeanors’ are, but I do know that this process has not convinced the people in my district we have impeachable offenses and that the president needs to be removed. I disagreed with how the Russia probe and Mueller report were handled and think it set the stage for the failed impeachment inquiry. The inquiry and hearing have been partisan and have failed in convincing the country while further placating some people who have wanted the president impeached since he was elected. ‘This process has been a mistake and I will not be whipped in line by my party. I may stand alone but I stand in good conscience. History will show this to be a mistake and the Senate will make short work of an acquittal.’” [Representative Collin Peterson, Press Release, 12/19/19]

Fischbach Said Trump’s Impeachment Was “Really Good For The Republican Party”
Fischbach Said Impeachment Was Good For Republicans Because It Had Unified The Party Behind Trump.

“Blois: Well ok, I’ll put it to you this way. There was also a primary election where, you know, the endorsed Republican defeated you and former governor Pawlenty. Are there other things within the Republican Party that people are divided over right now? Fischbach: You know, I don’t… I think I feel like it’s pretty unified. I mean obviously there’s an endorsement, no question, and we’re dealing with that. But I think that most folks are talking about you know there I think impeachment was really good for the Republican Party because they brought it it brought us all together, because the Democrats were so ridiculous. And so it’s such a sham... and it really, I think brought folks together on that. But I think they’re united behind Trump. And they’re all working together at this point.” [Beers with Blois, Michelle Fischbach Interview, 1/3/20]

October 2019: Fischbach Was Invited To Speak At An Anti-Impeachment Rally On Behalf Of The Republican National Committee

October 2019: Fischbach Was Invited To Speak At An Anti-Impeachment Rally On Behalf Of The Republican National Committee. “Though Trump has not endorsed Fischbach, she alone among the GOP’s Seventh District candidates was invited to speak on behalf of the president at an anti-impeachment rally in Detroit Lakes in October organized by the Republican National Committee.” [Star Tribune, 12/4/19]
Issues
Abortion & Women’s Health Issues

**Significant Findings**

- Before running for office, Fischbach was a pro-life influencer in Republican circles. She was the Executive Director of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee, and warned in 1991 that Republicans would leave the party if the party “desert[ed] the pro-lifers.”

- On multiple occasions Fischbach imperiled large funding bills due to her insistence on anti-abortion riders.
  - In 1999, in an effort to pass a 24 hour waiting period provision, Fischbach tried to hold up funding for a prescription drug program for seniors, and salary increases for nursing home workers.
  - In 2001, due to her insistence on a 24 hour waiting period provision, Fischbach imperiled the passage of an $8.6 billion Health, Human Services, and Corrections funding bill.
  - In 2002, due to her insistence on attaching a 24 hour waiting period rider to a budget bill, Fischbach imperiled key unemployment and education funding across the state of Minnesota.
  - In 2005, Fischbach said her goal was to create a “culture of life” in Minnesota by passing bills that restricted abortion rights.
  - In 2011, Scott Fischbach threatened Republican leaders in Minnesota for failing to ban abortion, even though his wife was president of the Senate at the time.

**Regulations**

**Fischbach Opposed Abortion, But Supported Exceptions If The Mother’s Life Was In Jeopardy**

Fischbach Opposed Abortion, But Supported Exceptions If The Mother’s Life Was In Jeopardy. “Fischbach is anti-abortion, though she said she supports exceptions if the mother’s life is in jeopardy.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/29/12]

**2013: The Senate Rejected Fischbach’s Amendment That Required Clinics Performing Over Ten Abortions Per Year To Obtain A License**

2013: By A 35-30 Vote, The Senate Rejected Fischbach’s Amendment That required Clinics Performing Over Ten Abortions Per Year To Obtain A License. “Minnesota already is on track to establish a new way for its residents to buy health insurance, and now legislators are poised to change how the state takes care of its elderly, disabled and poor. Senators debated late Thursday their plan to spend $11.2 billion in the next two years for health care, which is second only to public school funding in the $38 billion state budget. […] Led by the Democratic Senate majority, a provision to license abortion clinics was rejected 35-30. However, the provision is in a House bill, so it remains alive. The proposal by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, would have required clinics that perform more than 10 abortions a year to obtain a state license.” [Duluth News Tribune, 4/25/13]

**2005: Fischbach Sponsored A Bill That Would Require Doctors To Offer To Anesthetize A Fetus Before An Abortion After 20 Weeks**
2005: Fischbach Sponsored A Bill That Would Require Doctors To Offer To Anesthetize A Fetus Before An Abortion After 20 Weeks. “Sponsored by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, the so-called ‘Fetal Pain Prevention Act’ would make it a felony for a doctor not to offer to anesthetize a fetus if it is more than 20 weeks developed. ‘It requires the doctor to offer it; it doesn’t require the woman to take it,’ she said. ‘This is a child that’s going to be ripped apart. To not provide them with anesthesia or at least offer it, I don’t think a felony is too much.’” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/05]

Fischbach Said She Considered This Bill Part Of Her Agenda To “Create A Culture Of Life.” “Fischbach said she considers her bill part of a new path focusing on prevention and ‘creating a culture of life’ that was begun with the 2003 law requiring a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion and specific information about abortion and alternatives.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/05]

2005: Fischbach Introduced Legislation Making It A Felony For Doctors Not To Offer To Anesthetize A Fetus If The Abortion Happened After 20 Weeks

2001: After Failing To Pass A Bill Mandating A 24 Hour Waiting Period Before A Woman Could Get An Abortion, Fischbach Complained That The Committee Was “Stacked Against Us.” “While the victory may be short-lived, opponents of a bill creating 24-hour waiting periods for abortions watched a Senate committee reject the measure on a 7-4 vote Wednesday. The Health and Family Security Committee took testimony and debated the bill for 90 minutes, but its sponsor said the outcome was predetermined. ‘This committee is stacked against us,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who added it was ‘not a great surprise and not a major setback.’” [Star Tribune, 4/5/01]

After NARAL Criticized The 24 Hour Waiting Period Legislation, Fischbach Reacted Angrily And Claimed Her Bill Was Not Meant To “Harass Or Intimidate Someone.” “Opponents of the measure said a provision requiring the name of the physician who would perform the procedure to be given to a woman 24 hours in advance is designed to intimidate physicians and ‘sets a tone of state-sanctioned harassment.’ Stanley, of Minnesota NARAL, said it also could have a chilling effect on medical students who might consider performing abortions in their practices but fear repercussions by activists opposed to abortion. Abortion-rights supporters pointed to a recent federal appeals court ruling that an Internet site run by militant abortion opponents and filled with threatening content is protected by the First Amendment. ‘The Nuremberg Files,’ found on the Internet, contains the names, addresses and photos of some physicians in the format of a ‘wanted’ poster and accuses them of crimes against humanity. Fischbach reacted angrily over the issue, saying that she didn’t condone the direct action behavior and that the MCCL didn’t either. ‘My bill is not to harass someone or intimidate someone,’ she said. ‘I do not appreciate that you’re trying to imply that there is some intent other than to provide information about physicians.’” [Star Tribune, 4/5/01]

2003: Fischbach Supported A Bill That Required A 24 Hour Waiting Period Before A Woman Could Get An Abortion. “Fischbach has been a Senate leader in opposing abortion, helping pass a bill in 2003 that requires a 24-
hour waiting period before a woman can get an abortion. Her husband, Scott, whom she met while working on that Boschwitz campaign, is the director of the state’s largest anti-abortion organization.” [St. Cloud Times, 11/2/06]

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2003: Fischbach Staged A Protest In The State Legislature Because She Was Angry That Her Waiting Period Provision Did Not Pass. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach walked out of a committee last week in protest about a hearing on her bill requiring a 24-hour waiting period before a woman can have an abortion. The Paynesville Republican hadn’t asked for the hearing on the so-called ‘Women’s Right to Know’ bill, but Senate Health and Family Security Committee Chairwoman Becky Lourey, DFL-Kerrick, decided to take testimony from opponents anyway. Fischbach and the two other Republicans on the committee walked out. Because a deadline already had passed, the bill was dead anyway and the hearing wasn’t necessary, she said. […] Fischbach expressed some frustration with Lourey’s committee, which is made up mostly of abortion-rights supporters. ‘They put three prolifers on that committee,’ she said. ‘It’s stacked against us.’” [St. Cloud Times, 4/13/03]

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<td>Due To Her Insistence On Attaching A 24-Hour Waiting Period Provision To A Budget Bill, Fischbach Imperiled Key Unemployment And Education Funding Across Minnesota</td>
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2002: A Budget-Balancing Bill Was Held Up In Committee After A 24-Hour Waiting Period Provision Introduced By Fischbach Was Attached To The Bill. “A Senate budget-balancing bill gained a controversial abortion provision and an additional increase in the cigarette tax Thursday evening, but it remained stuck in the Taxes Committee with an uncertain future. Amid Republican allegations of bullying tactics by Chairman Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, the panel voted 16 to 13 to add a 24-hour waiting period for abortions to the bill. […]” The abortion amendment angered Pogemiller, who branded it a delaying tactic by fiscal conservatives opposed to the bill’s tax increases. The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce said the increases would total more than $600 million on businesses over the next three years in addition to $530 million on cigarettes. ‘The goal is to balance the budget and get a bill to the governor that he will sign,’ Pogemiller said. ‘This makes it much harder. Senator [Roger] Moe and I aren’t going to bend arms for that.’” [Star Tribune, 3/22/02]

| Chairman Allegedly Threatened To Stop Key Projects In Legislators’ Districts Due To Fischbach And The GOP’s Insistence On The Waiting Period Provision |

Chairman Larry Pogemiller Alleged The Waiting Period Provision, Arguing That It Increased The Chances Of The Governor Vetoing The Bill, And Made It Harder To Balance The Budget. “The abortion amendment angered Pogemiller, who branded it a delaying tactic by fiscal conservatives opposed to the bill’s tax increases. The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce said the increases would total more than $600 million on businesses over the next three years in addition to $530 million on cigarettes. ‘The goal is to balance the budget and get a bill to the governor that he will sign,’ Pogemiller said. ‘This makes it much harder. Senator [Roger] Moe and I aren’t going to bend arms for that.’ Moe, the DFL Senate majority leader from Erskine, Pogemiller and Gov. Jesse Ventura all support abortion rights. Ventura has twice vetoed the 24-hour wait, which its proponents call the ‘Women’s Right to Know.’ The same provision has been passed by the Republican-controlled House.” [Star Tribune, 3/22/02]

| The Chairman Allegedly Threatened To Cut Key Education And Unemployment Funding In Legislators’ Districts Due To Fischbach And The GOP’s Insistence On The Waiting Period Provision |

Pogemiller Alleged That The GOP’s Insistence On The Waiting Period Provision, Which He Saw As Unnecessary.
On Thursday, GOP abortion opponents accused Pogemiller of bending their arms to the point of extortion in an effort to get them to back off the abortion amendment. In a private morning meeting, they said, he threatened to stop projects in their districts if they went ahead. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who offered the abortion amendment, said the losses could include unemployment benefits for families affected by mass layoffs and school aid for districts with declining enrollments.” [Star Tribune, 3/22/02]

Despite Concerns That A Budget Bill Was Not The Place For A Politically Charged Abortion Amendment, Fischbach Remained Stubborn

Despite Concerns That A Budget Bill Was Not The Place For A Politically Charged Abortion Amendment, Fischbach Argued Otherwise And Said The Bill Was “A Christmas Tree Bill Already.” “But a midweek meltdown started when abortion opponents on the committee attached an amendment to mandate a 24-hour waiting period for abortions. The proposal also would require doctors to dispense specific information regarding the procedure, its hazards and alternatives. ‘Abortion politics in the tax bill, that’s new,’ Moe said. ‘You understand it in health, but in taxes, that’s new ground.’ Moe, who supports abortion rights, said that while the Taxes Committee has a slight majority of senators who oppose abortion, ‘that’s never really been a consideration on the Tax Committee before.’ The waiting period is a ‘legitimate issue,’ Moe said, ‘just not in a budget reconciliation bill.’ But Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who sponsored the amendment, said that’s just the place for it. ‘It’s a Christmas tree bill already,’ she said, referring to the numerous fiscal proposals from various policy areas in the bill. ‘When they lump everything into one omnibus bill, what do they expect?’” [Star Tribune, 3/22/02]

2002: Despite Gov. Jesse Ventura Already Having Vetoed Her 24-Hour Waiting Period Provision Twice, Fischbach Tried Once Again To Attach It To A Tax Bill

2002: Fischbach Insisted On Adding A 24-Hour Waiting Period Provision To A Tax Bill, And Thereby Held Up Debate On The Legislation. “Smoking cigarettes would become dramatically more expensive under a budget-balancing bill that the Minnesota Senate Tax Committee was headed toward adopting Wednesday until an anti-abortion amendment put the tax debate on hold until today. With several Democratic-Farmer-Labor senators who favor abortion rights for women having left for the night, Tax Committee Chairman Larry Pogemiller himself a supporter of abortion rights interrupted consideration of the tax bill at about 8 p.m. rather than face a vote he might have lost. The committee was scheduled to resume consideration of the anti-abortion amendment at 8:30 a.m. today.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 3/21/02]

Fischbach Supported The Provision Even Though Gov. Jesse Ventura Had Already Vetoed It Twice, And A Spokesman For Ventura Said Fischbach’s Attempt To Push The Provision Was “Silly.” “The abortion amendment, sponsored by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, would require women seeking abortions to wait 24 hours and would require abortion providers to give the women detailed information about abortion. A similar provision is part of a House-passed budget bill. Fischbach said most Minnesotans support such a requirement. Pogemiller said Gov. Jesse Ventura has twice vetoed bills containing the 24-hour waiting period, and he said it was ‘silly’ for Fischbach to try to use the Tax Committee to oppose abortion.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 3/21/02]

2001: Due To Her Insistence On A 24 Hour Waiting Period Provision, Fischbach Imperiled A $8.6 Billion Health, Human Services And Corrections Funding Bill

2001: Fischbach Pushed A 24 Hour Abortion Waiting Period Provision Into An $8.6 Billion Health, Human Services And Corrections Funding Bill

2001: Fischbach Pushed A 24 Hour Abortion Waiting Period Provision Into An $8.6 Billion Health, Human Services And Corrections Funding Bill. “After being delayed for more than a week by political maneuvering, the $8.6 billion health, human services and corrections funding bill passed the Minnesota Senate on Tuesday with an anti-abortion amendment attached. The controversial provision requires a woman seeking an abortion to wait 24 hours and receive specific information about the medical effects of abortion, fetal development and the legal and
financial responsibilities of fathers. It is intended to encourage women to rethink the decision to have an abortion. The provision is contained in the House version of the bill, which is expected to win approval on the House floor later this week. […] Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who pushed the waiting-period language, said provisions for vulnerable Minnesotans should inspire votes for the bill as a whole.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/9/01]

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**But, Gov. Jesse Ventura Had Already Vowed To Veto Any Funding Package That Included The 24 Hour Waiting Period Provision**

Gov. Jesse Ventura Vowed To Veto Any Funding Package That Included The 24 Hour Waiting Period Provision, And Said That An Abortion Provision Should Be Introduced Separately. “But Gov. Jesse Ventura’s spokesman reiterated Tuesday that the governor will veto the entire health and human services funding bill if it comes to his desk with abortion language attached. ‘He wants it made clear that abortion has to be by itself on its own merits … not on the backs of the sick, the poor and the elderly,’ John Wodele said. After a week of intense pressure from both sides, Ventura vetoed a waiting-period bill last year. If Ventura vetoes the human services bill and the Legislature hasn’t allowed enough time to override his veto or remove the abortion language and resubmit the bill, the state’s health and human services departments will have to shut down, Wodele said. Such a shutdown is considered very unlikely.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/9/01]

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**Fischbach Encouraged Her Colleagues To Try To Override Ventura’s Prospective Veto**

Fischbach Encouraged Her Colleagues To Try To Override Ventura’s Prospective Veto. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who pushed the waiting-period language, said provisions for vulnerable Minnesotans should inspire votes for the bill as a whole. ‘If folks are that concerned … then they should help us override the veto,’ she said. Abortion opponents hold a slim majority in the Senate, making a veto override, which requires a two-thirds vote, unlikely.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/9/01]

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**Ventura Ultimately Vetoed The Spending Bill**

Ventura Ultimately Vetoed The Spending Bill And Said Fischbach And Supporters Of The Waiting Period Measure Were “Wasting Time And Playing Dead-End Political Games.” “Saying the House and Senate are wasting time playing dead-end political games,’ Gov. Jesse Ventura vetoed a bill Tuesday that would have created a 24-hour waiting period for abortion. But the veto doesn’t put an end to the issue. The abortion provision remains intact in a separate bill, the result of a House action Monday night in which the entire $6.3 billion health and human services bill including the abortion language was amended onto another bill. But that victory by abortion opponents was countered Tuesday by abortion-rights supporters, who managed to pass a Senate health and human services bill with no abortion language. What it all adds up to is this: The abortion issue and the billions of dollars for health and human services spending are no closer to being resolved. The two competing bills the new House version with the abortion language and the new Senate version without it probably will be resolved in a House-Senate conference committee.” [Star Tribune, 5/16/01]

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**1999: In An Effort To Pass A 24-Hour Waiting Period On Abortions, Fischbach Tried To Hold Up Funding For Prescription Drugs For Seniors And Salary Increases For Nursing Home Workers**

Fischbach Introduced A Bill To Impose A 24-Hour Waiting Period On Abortions, But The Senate Rejected Her Bill

1999: Fischbach Introduced A Bill To Impose A 24-Hour Waiting Period On Abortions. “Neuville’s original bill would ban so-called partial-birth abortions, which are performed by pulling the feet of a fetus through the birth canal, puncturing the skull and suctioning out the brain before removing the body. An exception to the ban would be to save the life of the mother.” [Associated Press, 3/30/99]
The Senate Rejected Fischbach’s Bill. “A Senate panel rejected two abortion bills Tuesday and significantly altered a proposed ban on some later-term abortions enough so that the sponsor of the bill considered it ineffective. ‘It never would be violated because the definition is so ambiguous,’ Sen. Tom Neuville, R-Northfield, said of the ban bill sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee by the Health and Family Security Committee.” [Associated Press, 3/30/99]

In Effort To Pass Her Abortion Bill, Fischbach Tried To Hold Up A Bill That Would Fund A Senior Prescription Drug Program And Salary Increases For Nursing Home Staff; The Senate Rejected Her Effort

While Trying To Pass Her Abortion Waiting Period Rule, Fischbach Tried To Hold Up A Bill That Would Fund A Senior Prescription Drug Program And Salary Increases For Nursing Home Workers. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, attempted to put the waiting period provision on the bill that would fund several programs, including salary increases for nursing home workers and the senior prescription drug program. But the Senate voted 34-32 to stand behind the decision of Senate President Allan Spear, who ruled that Fischbach’s amendment was not pertinent to the bill. The Senate did not vote on the merits of the waiting period.” [Associated Press, 4/21/99]

Senate President Allan Spear Rejected Fischbach’s Effort, Saying The Abortion Waiting Period Provision Was Irrelevant To The Spending Bill At Hand. “Sen. Allan Spear, DFL-Minneapolis, said a measure requiring a 24-hour waiting period and a state-published abortion information pamphlet was not sufficiently related to other topics in the 550-page bill. The amendment was about regulating health-care providers, and no comparable material was contained in the bill, Spear said.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 4/21/99]

Fischbach Complained That Spear’s Decision Was Born From Political Motives. “Amendment sponsor Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said after the vote that she considered the ruling political rather than procedural and that the issue deserves a full-blown Senate debate, which the ruling blocked.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 4/21/99]

Right-To-Know

2003: Governor Tim Pawlenty Signed Fischbach’s “Right To Know” Bill Into Law

2003: Governor Tim Pawlenty Signed Fischbach’s “Right To Know” Bill Into Law. “A requirement that women wait 24 hours before having an abortion is law in Minnesota. On a 41-24 vote, the Senate on Monday passed the so-called ‘Women’s Right to Know’ bill, and Gov. Tim Pawlenty signed it almost immediately. Abortion opponents celebrated the passage of the bill, which requires doctors to inform women about the possible risks of abortion, the age of the fetus and the financial responsibility of the father. It’s the first anti-abortion legislation passed this year. The Legislature has passed an abortion waiting period twice before. Gov. Jesse Ventura vetoed it. Under the bill, doctors must provide women with a publication from the Department of Health or direct them to a Web site with more detailed information about abortion and alternatives to it. They must report to the health department the number of women they counsel and the number who still choose to have an abortion. There is an exception provided for cases of a medical emergency. ‘This bill boils down to giving women information,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, a Republican from Paynesville who sponsored a similar Senate version. ‘We want to inform women about a medical procedure they’re about to undergo.’” [St. Cloud Times, 4/15/03]

2000: Fischbach Sponsored “Right To Know” Legislation To Make Pre-Abortion Requirements Stricter

2000: Fischbach Sponsored “Right To Know” Legislation Requiring Abortion Providers To Tell Women About Medical Risks And Alternatives To Abortion At Least 24 Hours Before Expected Abortion Procedures. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, sought to have her ‘women’s right to know’ bill amended to an omnibus bill that covers several topics, including health. The House included the women’s-right-to-know bill in its version of the same omnibus bill, which it passed early Tuesday morning. The bill requires abortion providers to give information about the procedure and alternatives to prospective patients at least 24 hours before a scheduled abortion, including information about its medical risks. They also would have to be given information on the medical risks of pregnancy, as well as facts about fetal development and names of agencies offering assistance and alternatives to abortion.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/22/00]

Fischbach Said Her Legislation “Empower[ed] Women” And Questioned Why Legislators Would Not Support It. “This empowers women, and I don’t understand why we would not support it,’ Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said of the abortion provision before the DFL-controlled Senate voted 33-31 to approve it.” [Associated Press, 3/21/00]

Critics Questioned Fischbach’s Motives For Introducing The Legislation

Critics Questioned Fischbach’s Motives For Supporting “Right To Know” Policies, Pointing Out That She Claimed It Did Not Undermine Abortion Rights, While She Simultaneously Said She Opposed Abortion. “Getting information sounds like common sense to me - and the bill is rather innocuous - but how it is worded and who supports it leaves me questioning the motives behind the bill. According to Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and author of the original bill, she does not see this as an attempt to undermine the legality of abortion. But she also opposes abortion rights and has the support of the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life. I guess it is presumed that women are not getting the input they need to make an informed decision. It also presumes that women are not taking into consideration the alternatives they may have at their disposal. This is an insult to women who labor over such a grave decision. When a man chooses to have a vasectomy, should we also question that decision and by law, require him to have other information to influence that unwise choice? As far as I know there exists no law that requires physicians to give out materials about other surgical procedures.” [St. Cloud Times, Diana Murphy Podawiltz Op-Ed, 3/26/00]

After The Bill Passed In The Senate, Fischbach Said She “Couldn’t Be Happier”

After The “Right-To-Know” Bill Was Passed In The State Senate As Part Of An Omnibus Package, Fischbach Said She “Couldn’t Be Happier” About Its Passage. “For Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, the vote represents a personal victory. She has carried anti-abortion legislation every year since her 1996 election and was Senate author of the women’s ‘right to know’ bill. ‘I couldn’t be happier,’ Fischbach said. ‘We got good language in there and the intent clearly is to get information to women.’ A few weeks ago, the Senate approved a significantly weaker version of the bill when they first debated Fischbach’s bill for inclusion in an omnibus bill. But that weaker version had a harder time, passing with only 34 positive votes. ‘I never thought we would get 37 votes,’ Fischbach said. ‘Some of the senators who voted for it are not people typically considered pro-life. I think it shows they read the bill, saw that it included compromises, and was worth passing.’” [St. Cloud Times, 4/11/00]

Gov. Jesse Ventura Ultimately Vetoed The Legislation, A Move That Drew Criticism From Fischbach

Gov. Jesse Ventura Eventually Vetoed Fischbach’s “Right-To-Know” Legislation, Which Prompted Fischbach To Express Her Disappointment. “Gov. Jesse Ventura’s veto of the ‘women’s right to know’ bill Friday afternoon immediately was hailed as a victory by pro-choice proponents and labeled a disappointment by anti-abortion forces. […] About 50 more people waited outside the governor’s office to hear the news and respond. ‘I am deeply disappointed the governor has denied the women of Minnesota the information they need to make an informed decision,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and author of the Senate bill. ‘I really did think he would sign it. He talks about personal responsibility and that involves making an informed decision. This information would help them make that decision.’ Local anti-abortion advocates had a similar response. ‘I’m
disappointed to say the least,’ said Mary Ann Hermanutz of Rockville, who is a member of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life. ‘I thought he was in favor of informed consent.’ Both Sviggum and Fischbach said they thought they had developed compromise legislation that responded to concerns on both sides of the issue.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/15/00]

Fischbach Wrote A Letter To Gov. Ventura To Further Express Her Disappointment, And Said She Opted Not To Protest Outside Of His Office. “More than half the Legislature, including most of the Central Minnesota delegation, has signed a letter to Gov. Jesse Ventura complaining about his veto last month of the ‘woman’s right to know’ bill. ‘We chose to write the letter instead of staging a protest outside his office door,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who was the Senate author of the bill.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/15/00]

2000: Fischbach Sponsored A Bill That Required Abortion Providers To Give Information About The Medical Risks And Alternatives To Patients Before An Abortion

Fischbach Sponsored A “Woman’s Right To Know” Abortion Bill That Was Vetoed By The Democratic Governor. “The past two years, in particular saw Fischbach involved in a number of high-profile issues, including her efforts to cut the state’s auto registration fees, eventually adopted in modified form by Gov. Jesse Ventura. She also championed the ‘Woman’s Right to Know’ abortion bill, passed by the Legislature but vetoed by Ventura, and led a successful compromise effort to ban snowmobile studs on paved trails.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/16/00]

Fischbach’s “Woman’s Right To Know” Bill Would Require Abortion Providers To Give Information About The Medical Risks And Alternatives To Patients At Least 24 Hours Before A Scheduled Abortion. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, sought to have her ‘women’s right to know’ bill amended to an omnibus bill that covers several topics, including health. The House included the women’s-right-to-know bill in its version of the same omnibus bill, which it passed early Tuesday morning. The bill requires abortion providers to give information about the procedure and alternatives to prospective patients at least 24 hours before a scheduled abortion, including information about its medical risks. They also would have to be given information on the medical risks of pregnancy, as well as facts about fetal development and names of agencies offering assistance and alternatives to abortion.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/22/00]

The Passage Of Fischbach’s Bill Marked What Many Saw As A Shift In Minnesota Senate Philosophy Which Had Historically Rejected Abortion-Related Legislation. “Moe acknowledged the vote seemed to represent a shift in Senate philosophy, which had rejected abortion-related legislation for years. Fischbach acknowledged the shift, too, but said today’s vote may not be indicative of how the Senate would vote on all abortion-related legislation. ‘This is a shift, but I don’t know that you can say the Senate is pro-life now,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/11/00]

Activism

Before Running For Office, Fischbach Was A Pro-Life Influencer In Republican Circles

Fischbach Was Executive Director Of The National Republican Pro-Life Committee. “I don’t know if it will even reach the floor,’ predicts Michelle Fischbach, executive director of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee. ‘The grass roots of the Republican party are pro-life. It’s necessary for pro-lifers to have that language.” [Oregonian, 11/20/91]

1991: Fischbach Worried That Republicans Would Leave The Party If The Party “Desert[ed] The Pro-Lifers.” “Republican abortion-rights supporters are preparing a new attack on their party’s position against abortion. ‘We’ve been civil and silent, and while we may remain civil, we ain’t going to be silent anymore,’ says Ann Stone, head of Republicans for Choice. ‘You may see people leaving the party if Republicans desert the pro-lifers,’ says Michelle Fischbach of the National Republican Pro-Life Committee.” [USA Today, 9/27/91]
2020: Fischbach Touted Her Pro-Life Record And Attacked Collin Peterson For Having A Lower National Right To Life Score Than She Did

2011: Fischbach Boasted That She Had A 100% “Pro-Life” Score According To National Right To Life, Compared To Collin Peterson’s 56% Score. “Great letter, Mary! Western Minnesota deserves a representative who will always vote to protect the unborn & oppose all taxpayer funding of abortion & abortion-providers. I’ll do just that because I’m 100% #prolife. 56% doesn’t cut it, Collin. #MN07” [Twitter, Michelle Fischbach, 1/22/20]

Fischbach Boasted That She Cast 149 Of 149 Possible Pro-Life Votes During Her Time In The Minnesota Senate. “During my time in the Minnesota Senate, I cast 149 out of 149 possible #prolife votes. That’s one of the main reasons why my campaign was recently endorsed by @nrlc and @MCCL_org. #MN07” [Twitter, Michelle Fischbach, 1/22/20]

“We just completed the 48th annual National Right to Life Convention. We know not everyone can attend but this year’s sessions were just SO amazing, we want to make sure you can order the CDs or MP3s of the sessions so you can benefit from the convention. Order information is at nrl convention. com! […] 26--Parliamentary Procedure Basics--Lt. Governor Michelle Fischbach.” [National Right To Life News, 8/1/18]

2005: Fischbach Said Her Mission Was To Create A “Culture Of Life” By Passing Bills Aimed At Restricting Abortion Rights

“Fischbach said she considers her bill part of a new path focusing on prevention and ‘creating a culture of life’ that was begun with the 2003 law requiring a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion and specific information about abortion and alternatives.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/05]

2003: Fischbach Encouraged Teenagers To Lobby For Pro-Life Legislation

“NRLC Senior Congressional Liaison Lori Kehoe and Minnesota State Sen. Michelle Fischbach informed teens that they truly have a voice intheir state assemblies and that teens can play a vital role in lobbying for the passage of pro-life legislation.” [National Right to Life News, 8/1/03]

Stem Cell Research

2011: Fischbach Voted Against Her Own Education Funding Bill, Because A Provision To Ban Stem Cell Was Removed From The Bill, Thereby Causing Tensions Within The GOP Caucus

2011: Fischbach Voted Against An Education Budget That She Herself Authored, Simply Because A Provision To Ban Somatic Cell Nuclear Research Was Removed From The Bill
2011: Fischbach Voted Against An Education Budget That She Herself Authored, Simply Because A Provision To Ban Somatic Cell Nuclear Research Was Removed From The Bill. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, voted against a budget measure for colleges and universities that she authored, though the measure passed the Legislature anyway and became law. Fischbach said she cast the ‘no’ vote to protest the removal of a provision to continue a public-funding ban for a scientific procedure that Fischbach and other critics liken to human cloning. In an offer that appeared to catalyze the final budget agreement between Dayton and legislative leaders, the governor proposed that policy provisions be stricken from spending bills. Fischbach said the so-called cloning public-funds ban was one such provision.” [St. Cloud Times, 7/29/11]

Fischbach’s Decision To Vote Against Her Own Bill Drew The Ire Of Republicans, Leading To Speculation That She Might Lose Her Committee Chairmanship Or Senate Presidency

Fischbach’s Decision To Vote Against Her Own Bill Drew The Ire Of Republicans, Leading To Speculation That She Might Lose Her Committee Chairmanship Or Senate Presidency. “At the eye of the storm, predictably, is Senate President and higher education chair Michelle Fischbach, who angered both leadership and many rank-and-file senators when she broke from her caucus to vote against her own higher ed bill over the dropping of a provision to outlaw embryonic stem cell research at state-funded institutions. Fischbach, who is married to Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL) head Scott Fischbach, may yet lose her leadership post and/or her higher ed gavel over the defection, and that prospect would set off a domino-effect tussle within the caucus over refilling not only Fischbach’s position(s) but other committee chairmanships put into play as a result. One rumor, for example, has Sen. Julianne Ortman possibly ascending to the Senate presidency in Fischbach’s place, thus in all likelihood opening a powerful and coveted position at the head of the Taxes Committee.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 8/12/11]

2011: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Make Somatic Cell Nuclear Research A Felony, A Policy Supported By Her Husband’s Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life

2011: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Ban Somatic Cell Nuclear Research, And Make Violating The Ban A Felony. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach is leading an effort to ban a scientific procedure she and other critics liken to human cloning. Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Rep. Bob Dettmer, R- Forest Lake, have introduced matching bills to ban human applications of the procedure known as somatic cell nuclear transfer. [...] In 2009, state leaders put a two-year halt on state funding for human applications of the procedure at the University of Minnesota. The Fischbach-Dettmer proposal would go further by banning it altogether. Those who violated the ban would be committing a felony under the proposal. ‘There is a life destroyed in cloning,’ Fischbach said Thursday. ‘We need to treat human life at all stages with dignity.’” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/11]

The Procedure Was Used To Create Embryos By Combining Cell Nuclei With Eggs That Lacked Them. “The procedure creates an embryo by combining a cell nucleus with an egg cell that lacks one, according to the National Institutes of Health. It can be used for therapeutic purposes, such as to generate body tissue, or for reproductive purposes, such as to clone an organism.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/11]

Scott Fischbach’s Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, Supported Banning The Procedure And Applauded Fischbach For Introducing The Bill. “Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, a leading anti-abortion group, has voiced support for the bill. That group’s executive director is Michelle Fischbach’s husband, Scott Fischbach. MCCL issued a news release saying it ‘applauds this move by legislators to protect human life from replication, manipulation and destruction.’” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/11]

Scott Fischbach

2011: Scott Threatened Republican Leaders In Minnesota For Failing To Ban Abortion, Even Though His Wife Was Senate President At The Time
2011: Scott’s Pro-Life Group, Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life, Said It Would Have To “Address” The Failure Of Minnesota’s Republican Leaders To Ban Abortion As Part Of A Budget Agreement. “A budget agreement being hammered out by Gov. Mark Dayton and Republicans in the Minnesota Legislature aimed at ending a state government shutdown came under fire from the states largest anti-abortion group over the weekend. Dayton and Republicans made an agreement late last week to resolve Minnesota’s budget impasse, in part by avoiding controversial social issues such as abortion and focusing on fiscal matters. A representative for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life told reporters that he now questions the pro-life credentials of GOP leaders and told Republican legislators to vote no on any budget agreement that does not ban abortion. In a veiled threat to Republicans, MCCLs Scott Fischbach told Minnesota Public Radio that his group will be taking a second look at Republican leaders. ‘We had operated under the assumption that we had pro-life leadership in both the House and the Senate. I think that there are many pro-lifers that are devastated now to the point of questioning some of that leadership, he said. And were going to have to address that down the road.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

…But, Michelle Was A Member Of Republican Leadership At The Time

2011: Michelle Fischbach Was President Of The Minnesota Senate. “Fischbach’s wife is one of those in leadership. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, is the president of the Minnesota Senate.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]

Scott Tried To Shift The Blame Away From Michelle And Onto Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch, Nothing That His Wife Was Not A Part Of Budget Negotiations. “SOCIAL ISSUES: IT’S ALL RELATIVE: MPR posted an interesting piece positing that the relationship between husband Scott Fischbach, head of MCCL and wife Michelle Fischbach, who is president of the Senate, could cause some problems in the passage of the budget bills. Social issues continue to put the heat on the GOP Senate caucus, it seems. MCCL’S Fischbach puts the finger on Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch for taking the abortion debate off the table, noting that his wife was not involved in budget negations.” [Minnesota Independent, 7/18/11]
### Agriculture & Food Access Issues

#### Significant Findings

✓ *In an interview conducted in September 2019, Fischbach did not know basic crop prices in Minnesota. After the interviewer asked her to state the price of soybeans, Fischbach said she did not know. When the interviewer pressed her further and asked her to simply list approximate prices, she was still unable to provide an approximate figure.*

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2019: During An Interview, Fischbach Failed To Give Even A Rough Estimate Of Soybean Prices In Minnesota. “Fischbach Doesn’t Know Basic Crop Prices When Michelle Fischbach was asked about the price of a bushel of soybeans in an interview on KFGO (7:00 into the interview), her response revealed just how little she knows about farming in Minnesota. Host: ... For example, okay, what is a bushel of soybeans worth right now, roughly? Fischbach: I didn’t look this morning, I’m sorry. Host: Well just give me a roundabout figure. Fischbach: I, you know what, I, I’m sorry, I can’t do that right now. As the host points out during their interview, questions about the general price of Minnesota’s top agricultural exports are not ‘gotcha questions,’ they are questions anyone hoping to represent an agriculture-heavy district should be able to answer.” [Minnesota DFL, Press Release, 9/6/19]

#### Tax Relief

| **1999: Fischbach Supported A Republican Property Tax Relief Plan For Farmers In Minnesota** |

Fischbach Supported A Plan For Farmers, Rolled Out By Minnesota Senate Republicans, To Provide $80 Million In Property Tax Cuts And $10 Million In Loans To Upgrade Feedlots To Meet Environmental Standards. “Senate Republicans have launched a sweeping farm assistance plan that would provide farmers with $80 million in property tax relief and $10 million in loans to upgrade feedlots to meet new environmental standards. The senators presented an 11-point proposal Thursday at a press conference also attended by House Republicans, who support the majority of the legislation. Area Sens. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud; and Dan Stevens, R-Mora, all threw their support behind the farm assistance effort. […] Fischbach, who represents mostly rural western Stearns County, said the tax relief package is good because it not only provides for short-term relief, but also permanent relief. She said the multi-point plan will be good for Stearns County farmers because it addresses immediate concerns and also ‘looks to prevent problems in the future.’” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/99]
**Budget Issues**

**Significant Findings**

- **✓ In 2011, Fischbach continued to accept pay during a government shutdown.**
- **✓ In 2009, Fischbach supported a budget proposed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty that made cuts to health programs, education, and local aid, without raising taxes on wealthy Minnesotans. The budget was opposed by lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, but Fischbach continually defended it.**
- **✓ In 2000, Fischbach supported a highly unpopular budget that was opposed by every other member of the Central Minnesota delegation, simply because it included a provision that she proposed to cut licensing fees.**

**Funding And Budgets**

**2009: Fischbach Defended Governor Tim Pawlenty’s Budget Proposal, Which Made Cuts To Health Programs, Education, And Local Aid**

**2009: Governor Pawlenty Proposed A Budget That Made Cuts To Health Programs, Education, And Local Aid, All Without Any Raises In Taxes**

**2009: In The Midst Of A Recession, Pawlenty’s Budget Proposal Removed People From Health Programs, Cut Education Funding, And Cut Payments To Local Governments, All Without Any Tax Hikes.** “How lawmakers deal with Pawlenty’s budget proposal is key to the 2009 legislative session. Legislators’ main job is to pass a two-year budget that will spend about $33 billion. That is hampered by an economic recession that likely will result in a $7 billion state budget shortfall. Pawlenty released his budget proposal late last month, cutting programs, shifting some school payments into the next budget, removing people from state health programs, lowering state payments to local governments and proposing what amounts to borrowing money to pay off construction loans. His plan also called for a variety of business tax cuts, including chopping the corporate income tax in half, on the theory that the move would influence businesses to spend money and keep workers employed. He demanded that the budget be balanced without raising taxes, and he proposed to raise few fees, all the while increasing public school spending.” [West Central Tribune, 2/9/09]

**Fischbach Defended Pawlenty’s Budget**

**Fischbach Defended The Proposed Cuts In Pawlenty’s Budget, And Criticized Democrats For Failing To Offer Their Own Plans As An Alternative To Pawlenty’s.** “On the other hand, Assistant Senate Minority Leader Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said the health and human services budget is rising dramatically, and money needs to be cut to balance the budget. Democrats have yet to offer their own plan to counter Pawlenty’s. ‘They have so far only criticized,’ Fischbach said.” [West Central Tribune, 2/9/09]

**Pawlenty’s Budget Proposal Received Bipartisan Criticism**

**Republican Legislators Criticized Pawlenty’s Budget For Its Cuts To Local Government Funding, And For Not Going Far Enough To Alleviate Economic Damage From The Recession In Minnesota.** “Sen. Julianne Ortman of Chanhassen, like Pawlenty a conservative Republican, criticized the governor’s business tax cut package as not providing enough immediate help to bring them out of the recession. Rep. Morrie Lanning, R-Moorhead, was
critical of Pawlenty’s proposal to chop state funds due cities, counties and townships.” [West Central Tribune, 2/9/09]

Democratic Legislators Criticized Pawlenty’s Refusal To Raise Taxes, And For Proposing Health Program Cuts That Were Projected To Kick 13,000 Minnesotans Off Of Their Health Insurance Plans. “Sen. Keith Langseth, DFL-Glyndon, said Pawlenty spends too much time emphasizing lower taxes. ‘When we went through these years of very high taxes, we had a very strong economy,’ Langseth said. ‘Now the entire emphasis is lower taxes and our economy is falling apart.’ Sen. Linda Berglin, DFL-Minneapolis, complained that Pawlenty’s plan would remove 113,000 Minnesotans from state-sponsored health insurance programs and force them to use expensive emergency room care.” [West Central Tribune, 2/9/09]

2000: Fischbach Supported A Budget That Was Unpopular Amongst The Central Minnesota Delegation, Simply Because It Included A Fischbach Provision To Cut Licensing Fees

2000: Fischbach Was “Thrilled” That A Tentative Budget Deal Included Her Provision To Cut Licensing Fees For Car Owners. “Three years ago when Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, went before a Senate committee with a plan to cut license tab fees, the response was less than enthusiastic and no one voted for the idea. Now, those fees may be slashed with the tentative budget agreement this week that lets the governor decide what to do with $175 million for permanent cuts or new spending. ‘I’m thrilled it’s become an issue. In ‘97, I was out there all by myself,’ Fischbach said Thursday. ‘I’m obviously excited that this could really happen. The fees are too high and they need to come down.’ She would like the deal better if the governor had adopted her plan to cut all tab fees by a percentage, instead of his plan to create a cap, probably of about $150. With her plan, every car owner benefits; with the governor’s plan, only people driving newer, more expensive cars benefit.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/5/00]

Fischbach Was The Only Member Of The Central Minnesota Delegation Who Spoke Favorably Of The Tentative Budget. “Fischbach was the only Central Minnesota legislator on Thursday to express happiness even with a portion of the budget agreement. With the agreement, House Republicans are planning $175 million in tax cuts, virtually all of it in income taxes, and the Senate Democrats are planning $150 million in new K-12 education spending and $25 million apiece in health and environment spending. Most local legislators said it appeared to be an adequate compromise, but they still were waiting to see the final deal, which includes the use of $1.8 billion in one-time spending.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/5/00]

1999: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Allowing Minnesota Cities To Use Tax Money To Fund More Private Nonprofit Projects

1999: Minnesota State Law Barred Cities From Appropriating Money To Fund Private, Nonprofit Youth And Senior Centers. “Under existing law, a statutory or home rule charter city cannot appropriate money to run a private, nonprofit youth center or senior center, so the only money Paynesville could dedicate to the city’s senior center was money specifically to pay for recreational programs. This became a problem when the city wanted to contribute to a new transit system started by the senior center that provides bus rides for people who have no other way to run vital errands, such as shopping or going to a doctor’s appointment.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/6/99]

Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Change This Policy. “A plan to allow small cities more freedom to dedicate tax money to historical work and to nonprofit youth and senior centers was approved this week by both the House and Senate and has been sent to the governor to be signed into law. The city of Paynesville asked Rep. Doug Stang, R-Cold Spring, and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, to carry this legislation after it found itself thwarted by state rules from being able to help out financially on certain projects beneficial to the community.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/6/99]
2010: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Require Zero-Based Budgeting In The State Of Minnesota

2010: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Requiring Zero-Based Budgeting In Minnesota, Meaning That All New Spending Had To Be Justified As If It Were A New Expenditure. “In announcing the first bills of session this week, Republicans in both chambers rolled out proposals - in House File 2 and Senate File 3 - that could set in motion substantial changes to how the state crafts its general fund budget. As proposed, the measures would do little to alleviate the state’s red-ink-soaked budget in this biennium. But passing such a bill could give Republicans some political cover when rhetoric gives way to the realities of budget-making later this session, and could ultimately alter the trajectory of state spending for years to come. […] In the upper chamber, new Senate President Michelle Fischbach’s version of the bill calls for true zero-based budgeting, where state spending is assumed to start at zero every biennium and all spending ‘must be justified as if it were a new expenditure,’ as the bill prescribes” [Finance & Commerce, 1/12/11]

St. Cloud Times: Fischbach Supported Zero-Based Budgeting, But Acknowledged That Union Agreements Would “Make It Challenging”

St. Cloud Times: Fischbach Supported Zero-Based Budgeting That Meant “Starting The Budget From Scratch And Looking At Every Possible Angle For Savings.” “Fischbach says the state needs to go to zero-based budgeting, which means starting the budget from scratch and looking at every possible angle for savings. She acknowledges that union agreements might make it challenging.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/20/10]

St. Cloud Times: Fischbach Acknowledged “That Union Agreements Might Make It Challenging.” “Fischbach says the state needs to go to zero-based budgeting, which means starting the budget from scratch and looking at every possible angle for savings. She acknowledges that union agreements might make it challenging.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/20/10]

Government Shutdowns

2011: Fischbach Criticized Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton For Failing To Avert A State-Government Shutdown

2011: Fischbach Criticized Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton For Failing To Avert A State-Government Shutdown. “A day after lawmakers and Gov. Mark Dayton failed to avert a state-government shutdown, the reactions of St. Cloud-area legislators ranged from reflective to defiant. […] Some area legislators felt a temporary spending measure could have supplied more time for the two sides to reach a permanent budget compromise. Senate President Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Rep. King Banaian, R-St. Cloud, criticized Dayton for not backing such a so-called ‘lights-on’ bill.” [St. Cloud Times, 7/2/11]

2011: Fischbach Continued To Accept Pay During A Government Shutdown

2011: During A Government Shutdown, Fischbach Continued To Accept Pay, Even Though Gov. Dayton And 14 Senators Announced They Would Not Accept Pay. “After Gov. Mark Dayton announced that he would not accept pay during the state government shutdown, 14 senators and 48 representatives followed suit. That leaves 52 of the 66 members of the Senate (79 percent) and 87 of the 135 members of the House (64 percent) who collected July paychecks. Put another way, shutdown pay is going to 69 percent of the 101 DFLers and 72 percent of the 110 Republicans. They are: Senators still being paid Thomas Bakk, DFL-Cook; Linda Berglin, DFL-Minneapolis; Terri Bonoff, DFL-Minnetonka; David Brown, R-Becker; Richard Cohen, DFL-St. Paul; Gary Dahms, R-Redwood Falls; Al DeKruif, R-Madison Lake; Scott Dibble, DFL-Minneapolis; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Paul Gazelka, R-Brainerd; Chris Gerlach, R-Apple Valley; Joe Gimse, R-Willmar; Barb Goodwin, DFL-Columbia Heights; Dan Hall, R-Burnsville; David Hann, R-Eden Prairie.” [Star Tribune, 7/10/11]

2006: After Minnesota’s Government Went Into An Eight Day Shutdown In 2005, Fischbach Complained The Following Years That The Media “Beat [Lawmakers] Up Pretty Good Over Staying Too Long.” “With last year’s eight-day partial state government shutdown fresh in voters’ minds and November elections looming, lawmakers are still explaining to constituents what happened last year. ‘The media beat us up pretty good for staying too long last year,’ Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, told a crowd of GOP supporters at a candidate forum on Saturday. ‘But we wanted to stay and make sure things were done right. Not that we were happy about the extra time it took, but it would’ve been worse if we hadn’t fought for the best deal possible.’ But Pawlenty and legislative leaders are working on a bill that would allow the state to continue paying its bills if lawmakers don’t finish their work on time during even-numbered budget years, to prevent future shutdowns.” [ ]
Consumer Issues & Regulations

Significant Findings

✓ In 1999, Fischbach supported repealing a ban on metal studs being used for snowmobiles in Minnesota. The ban was initially passed due to concerns about the studs’ impacts on roads, bridge decks, and driveways in Minnesota.

✓ In 2003, Fischbach introduced legislation to allow bars in Minnesota to conduct fantasy sports betting.

Snowmobiles

1999: Fischbach Supported Repealing A Ban On Snowmobile Studs

Fischbach Vowed To Repeal A Ban On Snowmobile Studs. “A move to repeal 1998 legislation that created a snowmobile stud user fee this year and a stud ban next year remained on the fast track Thursday when a House committee approved a bill identical to one approved Wednesday by a Senate committee. […] Local legislators, including Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Reps. Doug Stang, R-Cold Spring, and Leslie Schumacher, DFL-Santiago, pledged before the session to work on repealing the ban and replacing it with more reasonable legislation.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/15/99]

Minnesota’s Ban On Metal Studs Was Passed Due To Concerns About Impacts To Roads, Bridge Decks, Trails, And Driveways. “The law restricting metal studs on paved trails was passed in response to concern about impact to roads, bridge decks, paved trails and private driveways crossed by snowmobiles with studs. Public paved trails account for less than two percent of Minnesota’s extensive snowmobile trail system. Groomed, signed routes have been developed for snowmobiles with studs near paved trails that are closed to the use of studs.” [Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, accessed 12/17/19]

Gambling

2003: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Allow Bars In Minnesota To Conduct Fantasy Sports Betting

2003: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Allow Bars In Minnesota To Conduct Fantasy Sports Betting. “Fantasy sports leagues may be commonplace, but it’s still illegal for businesses to run them. Sen. Michelle Fischbach wants to change that. The Paynesville Republican introduced a bill this week that would allow bars to conduct fantasy baseball, football or other leagues as long as the payouts are equal to the fees charged for entrance, administration and transactions. The maximum payout would be $50 per person. The bar itself couldn’t have a financial stake in the league.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/16/03]
Crime & Public Safety Issues

Significant Findings

✓ In 2001, Fischbach voted against lowering Minnesota’s blood alcohol concentration threshold for drunk driving from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent.

✓ Fischbach opposed legalizing medical marijuana in limited forms, and said her potential support would be dependent on law enforcement groups getting on board.

✓ In 2007, Fischbach introduced legislation allowing cities to issue citations for minor traffic violations, which critics said was a move to pad city revenue.

✓ In 2003, Fischbach voted in favor of an amendment that would have limited the ability of childhood sexual abuse victims to sue their abusers. A bill was introduced to allow abuse victims more time to sue their abusers, but Fischbach voted for an amendment that allowed victims no more than nine years after the abuse to sue.

Alcohol

2001: Fischbach Voted Against Implementing Stricter Drunk Driving Standards In Minnesota

2001: Fischbach Voted Against Lowering Minnesota’s Blood-Alcohol Concentration Threshold For Drunk Driving From 0.10 Percent To 0.08 Percent. “The oft-defeated proposal to tighten Minnesota’s standard for drunken driving suffered its most ringing setback yet on Thursday when the full Senate narrowly voted it down. A group of mostly rural senators prevailed in a 33-30 vote to reject reducing the drunken-driving threshold from the current 0.10 percent blood-alcohol concentration to 0.08 percent. […] Republicans voting no (17) Charlie Berg, Chokio; Dick Day, Owatonna; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville; Dennis Frederickson, New Ulm; Debbie Johnson, Ham Lake; Bob Kierlin, Winona; Sheila Kiscaden, Rochester; Dave Kleis, St. Cloud; Arlene Lesewski, Marshall; Tom Neuville, Northfield; Mark Ourada, Buffalo; Pat Pariseau, Farmington; Mady Reiter, Shoreview; Martha Robertson, Minnetonka; Kenric Scheevel, Preston; Grace Schwab, Albert Lea; Dan Stevens, Mora.” [Star Tribune, 5/11/01]

Republicans Opponents Argued That Lowering The Blood-Alcohol Concentration Threshold Infringed On Personal Freedom And Would Not Necessarily Lead To Safer Outcomes. “Proponents had hoped that $70 million in federal incentives and penalties linked to adoption of 0.08 would prod legislators to support the measure. But Washington’s financial pressure only stiffened the opposition of some senators. Sen. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud, said that amounted to ‘blackmail,’ and added: ‘This is an issue of states’ rights. Maybe we should vote to send Congress a message to stop using our dollars to tell us what to do.’ Other senators said there was no evidence that 0.08 _ now adopted by 28 states, the District of Columbia and dozens of other nations would improve highway safety, although it would surely erode personal freedom, they said. ‘Every year we creep a little farther into people’s lives,’ said Sen. Pat Pariseau, R-Farmington.” [Star Tribune, 5/11/01]

Drugs

Fischbach Opposed Legalizing Medical Marijuana In Limited Forms

Fischbach Opposed A Bill That Legalized Medical Marijuana In Limited Forms. “The Minnesota Senate has voted resoundingly to pass a bill allowing use — but not smoking — of medical marijuana for people with
debilitating ailments. The Senate bill would allow use of medical marijuana by inhaling vapors or in pill or oil forms. It passed the Senate on Tuesday on a surprisingly strong 48-18 vote — a large-enough majority to override a governor’s veto. […] Here’s how St. Cloud-area senators voted Tuesday on a bill to legalize medical marijuana in limited forms: […] NO Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/14]

Fischbach Said Her Support For Medical Marijuana Is Tied To “Law-Enforcement Groups Getting On Board.” “Sen. Michelle Fischbach’s explanation of her vote showed how lawmakers’ stances on medical marijuana don’t follow party lines. Fischbach, a Republican from Paynesville, echoed Dayton’s position, saying her support for medical marijuana is tied to law-enforcement groups getting on board.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/14]
legislation to rename a portion of state Highway 23 to honor the service of fallen Cold Spring police officer Tom Decker. The legislation calls for a stretch of the highway starting with the east border of Wakefield Township to the western border of the city of Richmond to be named the Officer Tom Decker Memorial Highway. ‘This change is one small way to honor the heroic service of officer Decker and recognize his service to the public,’ Fischbach said. ‘I am honored to be able to carry this legislation.’” [Cold Spring Record, 1/29/13]

Sexual Abuse

2003: Fischbach Voted For An Amendment That Would Have Limited The Ability Of Childhood Sexual Abuse Victims To Sue Their Abusers

2003: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Bill To Give Childhood Sexual Abuse Victims More Time To Sue Their Abusers

2003: Minnesota State Law At The Time Only Allowed Victims Of Childhood Sexual Abuse To Sue Their Abusers Until Age 24. “A bill giving victims of childhood sexual abuse more time to file legal action survived a challenge on the Senate floor Monday and passed 41-25. The bill would allow victims up to six years after they recognize the damage the abuse has caused them to file a civil lawsuit against their abuser or the institution that failed to protect them. Courts have interpreted current state law to mean victims have only until age 24 to sue.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/6/03]

The State Senate Passed A Bill To Amend State Law By Allowing Victims To Sue Their Abusers Up To 6 Years After They Recognized The Abuse. “But it often takes longer than that to realize the effects of such trauma, said the bill’s author, Sen. Gary Kubly, DFL-Granite Falls. ‘Childhood sexual abuse is a crime of secrecy which often prevents many survivors from coming forward until much later in their lives,’ Kubly said.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/6/03]

… But, Legislators Tried To Add An Amendment To The Bill That Would Only Allow Sexual Abuse Victims To Sue Institutions For An Apology, And Not For Money

Sen. Thomas Neuville Tried To Add An Amendment To The Bill That Would Only Allow Sexual Abuse Victims To Sue Institutions For An Apology, And Not For Money. “Sen. Thomas Neuville tried to amend the bill to only allow victims older than 24 to sue if they were seeking an apology from the church, school or other institution that allowed the abuse to happen - not if they wanted to collect money for damages. ‘The only thing you can’t do is sue for $1 million, but you will get your psychological closure,’ said Neuville, R-Northfield. The theory that children who are sexually abused may repress memories of the abuse until much later is ‘a very problematic area of the law,’ Neuville said. It would be too difficult to defend against a lawsuit from a case stemming back decades, he said, and the cost of insurance for churches, schools and day care centers would skyrocket.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/6/03]

Fischbach Voted In Favor Of The Amendment That Would Have Limited Childhood Sexual Abuse Victims’ Ability To Sue Their Abusers

Although She Voted In Favor Of The Final Bill, Fischbach Also Voted In Favor Of The Amendment That Would Have Limited Childhood Sexual Abuse Victims’ Ability To Sue Their Abusers. “Neuville’s amendment failed 35-31. Several legislators who voted for it - including Sen. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud, and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville - later voted for the bill. A House bill awaiting a vote would give victims who report the abuse while they’re still minors until age 32 to sue. Those who don’t report it until they are adults would have five years after the report, but no more than nine years after the abuse to sue.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/6/03]
## Education Issues

### Significant Findings

- In 2018, Fischbach authored a bill that invested 36 million in the Minnesota State Grant Program, ensuring lower and middle-income families received direct financial aid.

- In 2013, as chair of the Senate Education committee, Fischbach opposed tuition relief funding for the University of Minnesota, even though officials from the university system had requested funding that specifically included tuition relief.

- In 2013, Fischbach voted against a higher education funding package that sought to lower tuition costs and voted against freezing tuition in Minnesota for two years.

- In 2013, Fischbach voted against an education funding bill that provided funding for all day kindergarten and special education services in Minnesota.

- In 2011, Fischbach advocated for and voted for sweeping education cuts that limited teachers’ bargaining rights, expanded voucher programs, froze special education funding, and eliminated funding for racial integration.

- In 2005, Fischbach supported performance-based pay for teachers in Minnesota.

- In 2005, Fischbach sponsored legislation allowing 10th graders to participate in a program to earn college credit during high school.

- In 2004, Fischbach called No Child Left Behind a “good blueprint” for education.

- In 2004, Fischbach voted to protect Minnesota’s controversial Education Commissioner, who had been accused of politicizing her office.

- In 2003, Fischbach called for cuts to funding that went towards the arts and facility improvement in Minnesota.

- In 2003, Fischbach co-authored legislation that required schools to spend more time teaching abstinence.

- In 2000, Fischbach supported eliminating K-12 performance requirements in Minnesota. She also opposed full state funding of K-12 public education.

- In 1996, Fischbach supported school vouchers.

### College Affordability

2018: Fischbach Authored A Bill That Invested 36 Million In The Minnesota State Grant Program, Ensuring Lower And Middle-Income Families Received Direct Financial Aid

2018: Fischbach Authored The Higher Education Omnibus Bill Which Invested 36 Million In The Minnesota State Grant Program. “In the Minnesota Senate, Fischbach chaired the Senate Higher Education Finance and
Policy Committee during the 2017 Session. In this role, Fischbach was chief author of the Higher Education Omnibus Bill, which invested $36 million in the Minnesota State Grant Program, which ensures lower- and middle-income families receive direct financial aid to help afford college and career training.” [State News Service, 5/25/18]

### 2013: As Chair Of The Senate Education Committee, Fischbach Opposed Tuition Relief Funding For The University of Minnesota System

#### 2013: University Of Minnesota Officials Sought A $91 Million Funding Increase That Included Tuition Relief Funding

The University Of Minnesota Officials Sought A $91 Million Increase In State Funding, Which Would Have Brought The State’s Total Contribution To $1.18 Billion Over Two Years. “The 2013 Legislature marks University of Minnesota President Eric Kaler’s first chance to negotiate a budget request at the State Capitol. On the other end of those discussions, several of the key legislators hearing Kaler’s pitch will also be new, either thanks to retirements, redistricting or committee vacancies. Even the conversation itself will be new, thanks to a bold budget request designed by Kaler and approved by the University’s Board of Regents last week. The University is seeking a $91 million increase in state funding for the 2014-15 biennium, which, if granted, would bring the state’s total contribution to $1.18 billion over the two years.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

The Funding Request Included A $14.2 Million Tuition Relief Fund, Largely Tied To Performance Standards, That Would Have Lowered Tuition Costs. “The request includes a series of distinctive features that legislators and University administrators say could change the discussion about higher education. Among the innovations is a plan to freeze tuition rates for in-state undergraduates if the state grants a $14.2 million-per-year ‘tuition relief’ fund. Another $11.5 million of the proposal is tied to performance, and would reward the University if it meets certain ‘accountability’ goals.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

#### Fischbach Indicated Opposition To The Budget Request, Arguing That The University Of Minnesota Was Asking For “Quite A Bit Of Money,” And Expressed Skepticism Towards A Tuition Freeze

Fischbach Indicated That She Opposed The University Of Minnesota’s Budget Request Because They Were Asking For “Quite A Bit Of Money.” “On the Senate side, Senate Higher Education Committee Chair Michelle Fischbach expressed reservations about the bottom line numbers in the University’s request. ‘Generally,’ Fischbach said, ‘it’s very high. They’re asking for quite a bit of money, and we don’t know what the state’s budget is going to look like.’” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

Fischbach Was Skeptical About Embracing A State Tuition Freeze Costing $28 Million, Even Though She Conceded That It Would Be Politically Popular. “Without a complete budget forecast, Fischbach wasn’t ready to commit the necessary $28 million toward holding tuition rates, even if it might be a winning issue politically. ‘[The tuition freeze] is going to be a very popular item, with parents and students,’ Fischbach said, adding, ‘It’s hard to say how much money we’re going to have available. They put a very specific price tag on that tuition freeze.’” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]

#### 2013: State Tuition Had Increased Nearly 50 Percent Since 2006.

2013: State Tuition Had Increased Nearly 50 Percent Since 2006. “Fischbach had been privy to the outlines of the budget request, thanks to a meeting with Rohloff over the summer, one of several that he and other government relations staffers held with key lawmakers. One feature of the proposal that Fischbach likes, at least in theory, is the notion of slowing the growth of tuition costs. This year, in-state tuition runs $12,040 per student, an increase of nearly 50 percent since 2006.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 10/17/12]
### 2013: Fischbach Voted Against A Higher Education Funding Bill That Sought To Lower Tuition Costs

By a 46-18 vote, the Senate passed a higher education budget bill that would have provided $1.2 billion in funding to public higher education systems in Minnesota, including funding for tuition freezes and financial aid. “Minnesota senators easily approved a higher education budget bill Wednesday 46-18, but debate made it clear they want to hold the public schools accountable for spending. The bill would give about $1.2 billion each to the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities systems, about $80 million more each than current funding. ‘We’re covering the gamut of what it takes to provide the workforce of tomorrow,’ said Higher Education Chairwoman Sen. Terri Bonoff, DFL-Minnetonka. The plan aims to make college more affordable by directing funds toward tuition freezes and caps at public colleges and universities and allocating more funds for state financial aid.” [Duluth News Tribune, 4/18/13]

**Fischbach Voted Against The Bill**

The following area lawmakers voted against the bill: Sens. Paul Gazelka, R-Brainerd; Carrie Ruud, R-Breezy Point; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Scott Newman, R-Hutchinson; Julie Rosen, R-Fairmont; and Dave Thompson, R-Lakeville.” [Duluth News Tribune, 4/18/13]

### 2013: The Senate Passed A Higher Education Budget Bill That Provided $1.2 Billion In Funding To Public Higher Education Systems In Minnesota, Including Funding For Tuition Freezes And Financial Aid

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### 2013: Fischbach Voted Against A Bill To Freeze Tuition In Minnesota For Two Years

The Minnesota Senate passed a bill to increase higher education spending and freeze college tuition for two years. “A budget bill for Minnesota colleges and universities that freezes tuition for the next two years is en route to the desk of Gov. Mark Dayton. Gov. Mark Dayton’s spokeswoman has confirmed he will sign the higher ed bill. The Minnesota House voted Friday to pass the bill, 76-56. Hours earlier the Senate passed it, 44-22. The bill would increase state spending on higher education by $250 million in the next two years. That includes a $102 million boost to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, or MnSCU, the statewide system that includes St. Cloud State University and at St. Cloud Technical & Community College.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/17/13]


### Education Funding

**2013: Fischbach Voted Against An Education Funding Bill That Provided Funding For All Day Kindergarten And Special Education Services In Minnesota**

The Senate passed an education funding bill that included funding for all-day kindergarten and $9 million in new funding for special education. “The state Senate has passed its education budget to provide funding for all-day kindergarten. The $15.6 billion package spends the most of all...”
budget bills in the Senate. It passed Thursday on a 35-28 vote. [...] The Senate bill provides $9 million in new funding for special education, an amount Pederson dismissed as insignificant. He also said the bill doesn’t do enough to reduce special education mandates for school districts.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/26/13]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill


2011: Fischbach Drafted A Budget That Made Large Cuts To The Minnesota State Colleges And Universities System

2011: Fischbach Drafted A Budget That Made Large Cuts To The Minnesota State Colleges And Universities System. “As Higher Education Committee chairwoman, Fischbach played a key role in drafting a budget last year that made deep funding cuts to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which includes St. Cloud State University and St. Cloud Technical & Community College. Fischbach says the committee also has worked to make college and university spending more efficient through initiatives such as a fund that leverages private donations for equipment purchases at MnSCU campuses.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/29/12]

Fischbach Proposed A Bill That Would Cut $12 Million For St. Cloud State University Over The Next Two Years. “According to Fischbach, her bill would cut funding for St. Cloud State University by $12 million in the next two years. That figure includes the bill’s cut in projected state funding, and accounts for the maximum tuition the bill would allow the university to collect.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/10/11]

Fischbach Said That Colleges And Universities “Understand The Situation The State Is In” When It Comes To Budget Cuts. “But Fischbach says colleges and universities have spent months preparing for the outcome of this year’s budgeting process, which many expected would yield deep cuts as the state balances a $5 billion two-year deficit. ‘They all understand the situation that the state is in,’ Fischbach said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/10/11]

Fischbach Voted Against Her Own Higher Education Bill When A Provision Banning Stem Cell Research Was Dropped From The Bill, Angering Her Caucus

Fischbach Voted Against Her Own Higher Education Bill When A Provision Banning Stem Cell Research Was Dropped From The Bill, Angering Her Caucus. “At the eye of the storm, predictably, is Senate President and higher education chair Michelle Fischbach, who angered both leadership and many rank-and-file senators when she broke from her caucus to vote against her own higher ed bill over the dropping of a provision to outlaw embryonic stem cell research at state-funded institutions. Fischbach, who is married to Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL) head Scott Fischbach, may yet lose her leadership post and/or her higher ed gavel over the defection, and that prospect would set off a domino-effect tussle within the caucus over refilling not only Fischbach’s position(s) but other committee chairmanships put into play as a result. One rumor, for example, has Sen. Julianne Ortman possibly ascending to the Senate presidency in Fischbach’s place, thus in all likelihood opening a powerful and coveted position at the head of the Taxes Committee.” [St. Paul Ledger Capitol Report, 8/12/11]

2011: While She Was Senate Majority Leader, Fischbach Advocated For And Voted For Sweeping Cuts To Education Funding
2011: Senate Republicans Passed An Education Bill That Curbed Teachers’ Bargaining Rights, Expanded Voucher Programs, Froze Special Education Funding, And Eliminated Racial Integration Funding

2011: Senate Republicans Passed An Education Bill That Curbed Teachers’ Bargaining Rights And Expanded Private School Voucher Programs. “The Republican-sponsored bill passed 68-59 at about 2:45 a.m., after nearly six hours of sometimes contentious debate in which Democrats assured Republicans that Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton would veto the measure because it contains policy changes he doesn’t support. The bill scraps teacher tenure for the state’s K-12 schools in favor of an evaluation-based approach that makes student test scores a major factor. It contains multiple curbs on teacher bargaining rights, including the strike ban. It also creates a system for grading schools that would award additional state funds to those that perform well. The bill wades into another area of disagreement between Republicans and Democrats by granting vouchers to help low-income families at failing public schools pay for private educations.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

The Bill Eliminated Aid To Foster Racial Integration In Parts Of Minnesota That Had Large Minority Populations, And Froze Special Education Funding. “It also eliminates aid aimed at promoting racial integration in Twin Cities schools that have large minority populations, and freezes special education funds.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

Democrats Criticized The Funding Bill, And Governor Mark Dayton Said He Would Veto It

Democrats Said The Bill Made Cuts That Hurt Minnesota’s Poorest And Most Vulnerable Communities. “House Democrats were uniform in their criticism, saying the bill’s cuts and policy changes would fall hardest on poorer districts. ‘There’s a lot of bad and ugly in it,’ Rep. Mindy Greiling, DFL-Roseville, said of the bill. In a letter to Garofalo, state Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius said she and Dayton don’t support the legislation. She said they hope to find common ground with Republicans but that the bill passed early Wednesday is ‘inherently harmful to at-risk students.’” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

Governor Mark Dayton Planned To Veto The Bill Due To Its Special Education Freeze, Voucher Expansion, And Elimination Of Racial Integration Funding. “The Republican-sponsored bill passed 68-59 at about 2:45 a.m., after nearly six hours of sometimes contentious debate in which Democrats assured Republicans that Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton would veto the measure because it contains policy changes he doesn’t support. […] Cassellius said she and Dayton take issue with the special education freeze, the elimination of racial integration funding and the voucher provision. She wrote that they were troubled by the strike prohibition and the elimination of tenure, and said efforts to promote better teacher performance should be undertaken in a separate bill. The K-12 education vote in the House capped a long day, night and early morning of debate in both the House and Senate on GOP-assembled budget bills. In addition to the K-12 bill, the House on Tuesday passed bills funding higher education and environment and natural resources programs; the Senate passed budget bills for higher education, environment and natural resources, and judiciary and public safety.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

Fischbach Defended The Funding Bill, And Dismissed Concerns From University Of Minnesota Officials Who Projected That The Bill Would Cost Them Over $200 Million In Funding

Fischbach Said That Even Though The Cuts “Sound[ed] Like Large Amounts Of Money, They Weren’t Truly That Bad Because They Would Not “Put The Universities Out Of Business.” “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, acknowledged that potential cuts to individual campuses ‘sound like large amounts of money’ but said they were relatively small in relation to the entire campus budgets. Fischbach said the reductions ‘will not cut so deep that they put the universities out of business,’ dismissing comments by Democrats that the proposal could force some smaller state schools to close.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

University Of Minnesota Officials Projected That The Funding Bill Would Cost Them $243 Million In Aid. “University of Minnesota officials predicted the Senate bill would cost them about $243 million in state aid, a bigger cut than the House or Dayton sought. Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, warned that the
reduction would be ‘economically devastating’ to the university and reverberate throughout the state’s economy.” [Associated Press, 3/30/11]

2003: Fischbach Called For Cuts To Funding For Arts Education And Improvement Of School Facilities

2003: Fischbach Lamented That The State Had Not Made Cuts To The Arts Education Funding And Funding For Improving School Facilities. “It made things extra interesting. It allowed and forced all committee chairs to open up their budget books and have each member look for ways to save money or create monies. I was happy when the governor announced that schools will be held harmless. Yet that too created a problem. That’s where half of the state’s dollars were spent. I felt we could have freed up money from existing programs such as the Perpich Center for the Arts, Alternative Facilities Aid and others. Here are millions of dollars spent foolishly that could better be used in the classroom. It must be remembered that less than half of the money spent for education goes to the classroom.” [St. Cloud Times, 6/8/03]

Alternative Facilities Aid Was A Minnesota Program Designed To Fund Facilities Improvement Projects For Minnesota Schools. “Alternative Facilities Revenue supports the following statewide outcome(s). […] Minnesotans have the education and skills needed to achieve their goals. School districts, students, and taxpayers are better served through healthy, well-maintained facilities, and through extension of facility life. This program allows large school districts to complete deferred maintenance, health and safety, and disabled accessibility projects that cannot be completed with other available funds and small school districts to address large scale health and safety projects.” [Minnesota Department of Management & Budget, accessed 1/10/20]

The Perpich Center For Arts Education Was The Agency In Charge Of Funding Arts Education Across Minnesota. “We are a state agency charged with fostering arts education across the state of Minnesota. There are three facets of our organization: an art school that delivers a public education centered in the arts for 11th and 12th graders from across the state of Minnesota; an outreach program that studies, supports, and funds arts education in the state; a state-wide lending library with a highly-developed collection of arts education materials and a SEED collection.” [Youth Speaks, Perpich Center for Arts Education, accessed 1/10/20]

2002: Fischbach Supported Cutting Costs In Administration For K-12 And Higher Education – But Opposed Cuts To Classroom Dollars

2002: Fischbach Supported Cutting Costs In Administration For K-12 And Higher Education – But Opposed Cuts To Classroom Dollars. “Fischbach said she would look at cutting some costs in administration of K-12 and higher education and the state departments that direct them. She is not in favor of anything that cuts classroom dollars, she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/19/02]

2000: Fischbach Opposed Full State Funding Of K-12 Public Education

2000: Fischbach Opposed One Hundred Percent State Funding Of K-12 Public Education, Worrying That It Undermined Local Control Of Education. “Fischbach opposes 100 percent state funding of K-12 education, fearing a loss of local control. She also opposes further restrictions on personal watercraft and supports market-based solutions to rising health care costs, such as medical savings accounts.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/31/00]

Minnesota Department Of Education

2004: Fischbach Voted To Protect Minnesota’s Controversial Education Commissioner, Who Was Accused Of Politicizing Her Office
2004: The Senate Voted To Remove State Education Commissioner Cheri Pierson Yecke From Her Office

2004: The Senate Voted 35-31 To Remove State Education Commissioner Cheri Pierson Yecke From Her Office. “Just hours after the Minnesota Senate removed her from her job as state education commissioner, Cheri Pierson Yecke lashed out Sunday at Senate leadership—blaming partisan politics for the loss of the job she has held for 16 months. Yecke was rejected 35-31 in a party-line vote at 3:40 a.m. Sunday. Capitol watchers say it is only the second time in more than 50 years that the Senate removed a state commissioner from the job.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/17/04]

Critics Said Yecke Was Too Biased To Be A Fair Education Commissioner, And Accused Her Of Politicizing Her Office

Critics Said Yecke Was Too Conservative And Too Biased To Be A Fair Commissioner, Citing Her Support For No Child Left Behind And Her Work On State Social Studies Standards. “Yecke admitted her tenure has been controversial. But she said her rejection has more to do with the current state of politics in St. Paul than her outspoken support for the federal No Child Left Behind Act and her work on state social studies standards, which some complained were too conservative and biased.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/17/04]

Critics Said That As Education Commissioner, Yecke Stifled The Flow Of Information To The Legislature’s Democrats, But Regularly Shared Information With Republicans. “Yecke admitted her tenure has been controversial. But she said her rejection has more to do with the current state of politics in St. Paul than her outspoken support for the federal No Child Left Behind Act and her work on state social studies standards, which some complained were too conservative and biased. […] Another Democratic critic, Sen. LeRoy Stumpf of Thief River Falls, accused Yecke of stifling the flow of information from the Education Department bureaucracy to the Legislature. He said department employees sometimes gave information to the Republican majority in the House, but withheld it from the Senate DFL majority.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/17/04]

Fischbach Voted To Protect Yecke And Keep Her In Office

Fischbach Voted For The Motion To Confirm Yecke And Keep Her In Office. “The vote against Cheri Pierson Yecke early Sunday fell along party lines: Republicans for: David Gaither, Plymouth; William Belanger, Bloomington; Betsy Wergin, Princeton; Bob Kierlin, Winona; Brian LeClair, Woodbury; Cal Larson, Fergus Falls; Carrie Ruud, Breezy Point; Dave Kleis, St. Cloud; David Hann, Eden Prairie; David Knutson, Burnsville; David Senjem, Rochester; Debbie Johnson, Ham Lake; Dennis Frederickson, New Ulm; Dick Day, Owatonna; Gen Olson, Minnetrista; Pat Pariseau, Farmington; Claire Robling, Jordan; Geoff Michel, Edina; Thomas Neville, Northfield; Steve Dille, Dassel; Paul Koering, Fort Ripley; Warren Limmer, Maple Grove; Mike McGinn, Eagan; Mady Reiter, Shoreview; Julianne Ortman, Minnetonka; Sean Nienow, Cambridge; Julie Rosen, Fairmont; Mark Ourada, Buffalo; Michael Jungbauer, East Bethel; Michele Bachmann, Stillwater; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville. DFLers against: Ellen Anderson, St. Paul; Keith Langseth, Glyndon” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/17/04]

Teacher Pay & Performance

2005: Fischbach Supported Performance-Based Pay For Minnesota Teachers

2005: Tim Pawlenty Pushed A Plan To Encourage School Districts To Negotiate Performance-Based Pay Agreements With Teachers

2005: Tim Pawlenty Pushed A Plan To Encourage School Districts To Negotiate Performance-Based Pay Agreements With Teachers. “The opportunity to have more teachers like Kvas serve as master or mentor teachers through a performance-based pay system has intrigued St. Cloud school district administrators. Gov. Tim Pawlenty is pushing the plan, and support is growing among school officials and lawmakers. Pawlenty’s proposal would
attempt to expand statewide what is being tried in three Minneapolis schools and two rural Minnesota school districts. It encourages school districts to negotiate a performance-based pay system with its teachers and includes the money to give it a try.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/05]

**Fischbach Hoped School Districts Would Support Pawlenty’s Plan, And That The State Senate Would In Turn Move To Support It As Well**

“Fischbach Hoped School Districts Would Support Pawlenty’s Plan, And That The State Senate Would In Turn Move To Support It As Well. “The key to getting something done in the Senate this year will be demonstrations of support for Pawlenty’s plan from school districts statewide, said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who serves on the K-12 Education Budget Division. ‘If you see the districts showing interest, you’ll see the Senate move,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/05]

**2000: Fischbach Supported Eliminating Minnesota’s K-12 Performance Requirements**

2000: Fischbach Supported Eliminating Minnesota’s “Profile Of Learning” Program, Arguing That It Was Too Burdensome And Stifled Teachers’ Creativity. “For Fischbach, government often creates too many regulations and interferes in local decision-making, such as with the Profile of Learning. ‘I think we could repeal it now and we’d still be in good shape. It eliminates all of the creativity in our teachers and in our students by piling on too many rules,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/31/00]

“Profile Of Learning” Was A Package Of Performance Indicators For K-12 Students In Minnesota. “Profile of Learning: Many recognize the Profile as its ‘performance packages,’ now renamed ‘standards.’ The performance packages consist of 80 content standards, 56 of them required in grades K-8th and 24 from 9th - 12th. Packages are highly specific and detailed projects that focus on attitudes, values and beliefs of students, rather than on transmitting knowledge. According to the U of M Study, The Impact of MN’s ‘Profile of Learning, released April of 2002, underlying the development of these ‘high standards’ is a ‘constructivist philosophy toward teaching and learning’. No longer is the focus of education on academics; rather children ‘construct’ their own meaning. Proponents of the Profile of Learning describe them as high standards, when in fact the Profile has continuously received failing grades from outside evaluators. It is almost impossible to fail a performance package as a score of ‘0’ represents an ‘incomplete,’ not a failing, grade. But then, how is one to grade a performance package? Defined by the Graduation Rule, a performance package is ‘a group of assignments and application activities [exercises] that a student must perform to demonstrate completion of the specifications of a content standard.’ For example, one class of juniors and seniors spent hours constructing a Mexican Government building out of graham cracker to fulfill their World Language requirement. Teachers often have to sacrifice chapters of academic education to pave way for time-consuming projects.” [EdWatch, 7/21/02]

**Vouchers**

**1996: Fischbach Supported School Vouchers**

1996: Fischbach Supported School Vouchers. According to Vote Smart, Fischbach supported “provid[ing] parents with state-funded vouchers to send their children to any participating school (public, private, religious, technical).” [Vote Smart, Minnesota State Legislative Election 1996 National Political Awareness Test, accessed 8/14/19]

**Public School Policies**

**Fischbach Endorsed Teacher-Led Voluntary School Prayer In Public Schools**

1999: Fischbach Voted For An Amendment To Require Schools And Libraries To Install Software To Filter Out Pornography

1999: The Minnesota State Senate Rejected An Amendment To Require Schools And Libraries To Install Software To Filter Out Pornography. “The 30-32 roll call by which the Minnesota Senate defeated an amendment to require schools and libraries to install software to filter pornographic Internet sites. On this vote, a ‘yes’ vote was a vote to require the filters and a ‘no’ vote was against the filters. Voting ‘yes’ were 5 DFLers, 24 Republicans and 1 independent. Voting ‘no’ were 30 DFLers and 2 Republicans.” [Associated Press, 5/3/99]


Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)

2005: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Allowing 10th Graders To Participate In A Program To Earn College Credit While Still In High School

2005: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Allowing 10th Graders To Participate In A Program To Earn College Credit While Still In High School. “SF837, Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: Authorizing 10th-grade students to participate in post-secondary enrollment options.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/05]

PSEO In Minnesota Allowed Students From 10th To 12th Grade To Earn College Credit While Still In High School By Enrolling In College-Level Courses. “Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) is a program that allows 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade students to earn college credit while still in high school, through enrollment in and successful completion of college-level courses. With traditional PSEO, these courses are generally offered on the campus of the postsecondary institution; some courses are offered online. Postsecondary institutions are not allowed to charge PSEO students for tuition, textbooks or support services. Students may be charged for equipment that becomes their property when the course or program is completed. Most PSEO courses are only open to high school students during their 11th- and 12th-grade year, with each participating college and university setting their own requirements for enrollment into the PSEO courses and programs. Students may take PSEO courses on a full- or part-time basis.” [Minnesota Department of Education, Postsecondary Enrollment Options, accessed 1/15/20]

No Child Left Behind

2004: Fischbach Called No Child Left Behind A “Good Blueprint” For Education, But Felt It Needed Changes

2004: Fischbach Called No Child Left Behind A “Good Blueprint” For Education, But Felt It Needed Changes. “Minnesota Republicans strongly support Bush on many issues, but No Child Left Behind is not one of them. ‘There are good aspects to No Child Left Behind, but education is a living, breathing entity,’ said state Sen. Michelle Fischbach, 38, of Paynesville, a GOP convention delegate. ‘It’s a good blueprint, but there are some things that may need to be changed,’ she said.” [Gannett News Service, 8/30/04]
2003: Fischbach Co-Authored Legislation Requiring Schools To Spend More Time Teaching Abstinence

2003: Fischbach Co-Authored A Bill Requiring Schools To Teach STD Prevention And Abstinence In Their Curriculums. “A group of lawmakers from central Minnesota are pushing a bill that would require schools to spend more time teaching students to abstain from sex until marriage. If the legislation passes, schools would have to teach a curriculum based on the importance of abstinence to avoid the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. The bills are authored by Rep. Sondra Erickson and Sen. Betsy Wergin, both Princeton Republicans. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, is a co-author of the Senate bill. ‘I think we all would agree that abstinence is safe, healthy and secure,’ Erickson said at a House hearing Tuesday. ‘Our young people can and do say ‘no.’” The law already requires schools to teach both STD prevention and abstinence. Erickson said abstinence is not given enough time or attention, and the emphasis is on reducing sex-related risks, not avoiding them altogether through abstinence.” [Associated Press, 3/12/03]
Election Law & Campaign Finance Issues

**Significant Findings**

- In 2012, Fischbach supported a constitutional amendment requiring voters to show an ID before voting.
- In 2004, Fischbach was one of only two Minnesota legislators to vote against publicly funding elections in Minnesota.
- In 1999, Fischbach voted against easing restrictions on gifts that legislators could take from lobbyists.
- In 1996, Fischbach opposed campaign finance limits and did not support spending limits on state level political campaigns.

**Campaign Finance**

2004: Fischbach Was One Of Only Two Minnesota Legislators To Vote Against Publicly Funding Elections In Minnesota

2004: Fischbach Was One Of Only Two Dissenting Votes Against A Bill To Publicly Finance Minnesota Elections. “Do you believe in fair and clean elections? Until recently I would have given that question less credence than ‘Do you believe in fairies?’ Though I could suspend reality long enough to clap ardently for Tinkerbelle, elections untainted by big money were pure fantasy. Then I heard about Maine and Arizona, states that recently passed Fair and Clean Elections laws. Minnesota has the opportunity to join these states. The Fair and Clean Elections bill (Senate File 998 and House File 1382) passed the Senate Elections subcommittee March 5 in spite of dissenting votes by Sens. Dave Kleis and Michelle Fischbach.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/8/04]

The Bill Allowed Candidates Who Showed Grassroots Support By Raising Hundreds Of Dollars In Small Donations To Qualify For Public Funding. “A fair and clean election system means candidates at the state level could qualify for almost full public funding, if they do the following: Show grass-roots support by collecting hundreds of small contributions - $5 to $50 - from eligible voters. (Does this make you think of Howard Dean?) Agree to strict spending limits. Agree not to take private money. Why public funds?” [St. Cloud Times, 3/8/04]

1999: Fischbach Voted Against Easing Restrictions On Gifts That Legislators Could Take From Lobbyists

1999: The Senate Passed A Bill Amending Minnesota’s Ban On Lobbyist Gifts To Legislators, To Allow Legislators To Receive $5 Per Day In Gifts From Lobbyists. “Much of the objection to the campaign finance reform bills has centered on changes to the state’s gift ban, which prohibits legislators from accepting anything from a registered lobbyist. The Senate bill passed containing a new allowance that will let legislators receive up to $5 a day in gifts from a registered lobbyist. This provision is designed to accommodate acceptance of food and drink, and has been cast as a ‘hospitality issue.’ That passage prompted Common Cause of Minnesota on Friday to award its new Golden Trough award to Sens. Ember Reichgott-Junge, DFL-New Hope, and Mark Ourada, R-Buffalo. They were the leading proponents of changes in the gift ban. The changes simply ‘put some common sense back into law, so people know when they are breaking the law when they are out accepting hospitality,’ Ourada said.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/1/99]
Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “When the Senate voted on its version of the bill, local legislators Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud, and Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, both voted against it. Sen. Dan Stevens, R-Mora, was not present.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/1/99]

Fischbach Opposed Campaign Finance Limits

1996: Fischbach Did Not Support Requiring Limits On Individual Contributions To State Legislative Candidates. According to Vote Smart, Fischbach did not support “requiring limits on individual contributions to state legislative candidates.” [Vote Smart, Minnesota State Legislative Election 1996 National Political Awareness Test, accessed 8/14/19]

1996: Fischbach Did Not Support Imposing Spending Limits On State Level Political Campaigns. According to Vote Smart, Fischbach did not support “imposing spending limits on state level political campaigns.” [Vote Smart, Minnesota State Legislative Election 1996 National Political Awareness Test, accessed 8/14/19]

Primary Elections

2005: Gov. Tim Pawlenty Vetoed Fischbach’s Bill To Allow Municipalities To Skip State Primaries, Citing Concerns About The Bill’s Conflicting Language With State Law

2005: Gov. Pawlenty Vetoed Fischbach’s Bill To Allow Municipalities To Skip State Primaries If None Of The Offices Were Contested. “Gov. Tim Pawlenty used his veto pen for the first time this session to kill a bill that two area lawmakers sponsored. Pawlenty vetoed SF879, a bill that would let townships and cities skip state primaries when none of the offices are contested. Its sponsors are Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Rep. Larry Hosch, DFL-St. Joseph.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/12/05]

Pawlenty Was Concerned That The Bill’s Language Conflicted With Existing State Election Law, And Could Potentially Trigger Election Challenges. “But Pawlenty’s letter to legislative leaders said he was vetoing the bill this week because it conflicts with existing language in state election law and it might cause confusion in preparing ballots or trigger election challenges.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/12/05]

Fischbach And Her Co-Sponsor Were Reportedly “Stunned” By Pawlenty’s Veto. “Hosch said he and Fischbach were stunned by Pawlenty’s veto, which they learned about Wednesday. ‘This bill’s been through the entire committee process, and those concerns were never raised,’ he said. ‘It’s a common-sense bill, and I hope we can get it resolved so it still happens.’ That might still be possible. The bill was included in both House and Senate state government budget bills.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/12/05]

Unicameral Legislature

1999: Fischbach Supported Having A Statewide Referendum To Determine Whether Or Not Minnesota Should Switch To A Unicameral Legislature System

1999: Minnesota Politicians Deliberated Efforts To Switch To A One-House State Legislature. “For St. Cloud Sen. Dave Kleis, this year’s anticipated debate at the state Capitol on the merits of a one-house Legislature represents five years of effort. Kleis has made more than 200 personal appearances in that time touting the benefits of a unicameral Legislature. And, with Gov. Jesse Ventura having made a unicameral referendum vote a top issue for this session, Kleis is seeing his work come to some fruition. ‘It’s now or never. Or at least it’s now or 10 years from now,’ Kleis said. ‘We’ll never have another situation where the governor shows this much support.’ But Kleis and other unicameral supporters need more than just the governor’s backing. If his fellow Central Minnesota legislators are any indication, Kleis still faces a tough battle. None are an outright supporter of a unicameral Legislature, and only a few are even interested in seeing it on a ballot for voters to decide. ‘If you can show me a
unicameral (system) is superior, then OK, but at this point, I can’t see that,’ said Sen. Mark Ourada, R-Buffalo. Rep. Mark Olson, R-Big Lake, had supported a unicameral Legislature but now opposes it.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/1/00]

**Fischbach Supported Having A Statewide Referendum So That Voters Could Decide Whether Or Not They Supported A Unicameral Legislative System.** “‘I have been pro in the sense of voting to put it on the ballot,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. ‘But I see advantages and disadvantages to both systems. The problem I have here is that I believe we should let the people vote on things that control the Legislature.’” [St. Cloud Times, 2/1/00]

**Critics Said A Statewide Referendum Would Oversimplify The Gravity Of Potentially Transitioning To A Unicameral System.** “Rep. Joe Opatz, DFL-St. Cloud, said the issue isn’t as simple as allowing a public vote. ‘As legislators we are supposed to make judgments on what should and shouldn’t go to the voters,’ said Opatz, who hasn’t decided whether he will support putting the issue on the ballot. ‘It’s not as simple as saying everything someone wants to put on the ballot should go on. It’s not as shallow as that.’” [St. Cloud Times, 2/1/00]

### Voting Rights

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<td><strong>2012: Fischbach Supported A Constitutional Amendment Requiring Voters To Show A Photo ID Before Voting.</strong> “A St. Cloud GOP legislator is questioning a proposed amendment to the state Constitution that would require voters to show photo identification before casting a ballot. […] Other St. Cloud-area lawmakers have shown support for the photo ID amendment. Sen. Dave Brown, R-Becker, is a co-sponsor of its Senate version. Sens. John Pederson, R-St. Cloud; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; and Paul Gazelka, R-Brainerd; voted to advance it through Senate committees in recent weeks.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/12]</td>
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**Energy Issues**

**Significant Findings**

✓ In 2005, Fischbach voted to double the amount of ethanol in Minnesota gasoline.

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**Ethanol**

**2005: Fischbach Voted To Double The Amount Of Ethanol In Minnesota Gasoline**

2005: The Minnesota Senate Voted To Require Ethanol To Be 20 Percent Of Gasoline In Minnesota By 2012. “Central Minnesota senators lined up unanimously Monday in favor of doubling the amount of ethanol in Minnesota gasoline by 2012. The bipartisan 54-12 Senate vote would require the corn-based alternative fuel to be 20 percent of the gasoline sold in Minnesota by that date. Current law requires a 10 percent ethanol content.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/05]

2005: Minnesota Had 14 Ethanol Plans That Produced 400 Million Gallons Of Ethanol Annually. “Minnesota’s 14 ethanol plants produce 400 million gallons of ethanol a year. Supporters say the higher requirements would boost production by an additional 150 million gallons a year.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/05]

Fischbach Voted In Favor Of Doubling The Requirement. “The Senate voted 54-12 Monday to require that the amount of ethanol contained in gasoline sold in Minnesota be doubled by 2012. A ‘yes’ vote was a vote favoring the requirement. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: Yes.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/05]
Environmental Issues

**Significant Findings**

- **In 2007, Fischbach drew criticism for sponsoring legislation to allow non-biodegradable devices to be used to trap bears. Critics said it would essentially allow animals to be ambushed, while others opposed the move for environmental reasons.**

- **In 2007, Fischbach defended Dianne Mandernach, the then-Minnesota Health Commissioner who delayed the release of data on mesothelioma, a type of cancer that caused the death of 35 miners in the state.**

- **In 1999, Fischbach voted to repeal a vehicle emissions-testing program, even though the program’s supporters said repealing it would exacerbate air quality standards in Minnesota.**

**Pollution**

**2007: Fischbach Drew Criticism For Sponsoring Legislation To Allow Non-Biodegradable Devices To Be Used To Trap Bears**

2007: **Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Allow Change State Law To Allow A Steel Device To Be Used To Trap Bears.** “A Stearns County-manufactured bear-bait dispenser would be legal to use in Minnesota bear hunting, if a bill that got its first examination Monday in the Minnesota Legislature becomes law. Mike and Kirsten Lucken of Albany are co-owners of Bear Busters Inc., a Paynesville business that got its start a year ago and makes the automated bait dispenser. But while bear baiting is legal in Minnesota, the Luckens haven’t sold their product here because the Department of Natural Resources believes the $799 steel cabinet-shaped device might conflict with the part of the law that requires using only biodegradable materials.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/13/07]

**Critics Said The Bill Would Essentially Allow Animals To Be Ambushed, And Some Opposed The Increased Use Of Technology In Hunting.** “Senate and House versions of the bill from Rep. Larry Hosch, DFL-St. Joseph, and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, drew fire Monday from people who say using bait to attract an animal amounts to setting up an ambush. Others oppose the increasing use of technology in hunting.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/13/07]

**1999: Fischbach Voted To Repeal A Vehicle Emissions-Testing Program; Proponents Of The Program Said Its Repeal Would Exacerbate Air Quality Standards In Minnesota**

**1999: The Minnesota State Senate Voted To Repeal A Vehicle Emissions-Testing Program, Which Was Aimed At Curbing Air Pollution**

1999: **The Minnesota Senate Voted To Repeal A Vehicle Emissions-Testing Program That Required Owners Of Models More Than Five Years Old To Get Them Tested Annually.** “The question now before the Legislature is not whether the Twin Cities-area vehicle emissions-testing program will end, but the date it will end. On Wednesday, the Senate voted 55 to 9 to repeal on July 1, 2000, the eight-year-old program that requires owners of cars more than five model years old to have them tested annually.” [Star Tribune, 4/15/99]

**Supporters Of The Program Worried That Repealing It Would Exacerbate Air Pollution.** “Of the nine votes against repealing the program, seven came from metro-area senators whose constituents are subject to the tests.
‘The people who I represent are the people who have to breathe the air that’s filled with toxic emissions,’ said Sen. Ellen Anderson, DFL-St. Paul, one of the ‘no’ votes. ‘We know that our air is getting more polluted, not less polluted,’ she said. […] Repeal of the program is based on air-quality measures that show the metro area is no longer violating federal carbon monoxide standards, the primary reason the EPA said the program should be initiated. But Anderson and others inside and outside the Legislature contend that other toxic emissions from gasoline engines, including ozone, are increasing. They argued that the program should be maintained to test for other emissions. Anderson said repeal isn’t necessarily a political plus for legislators. ‘I’ve heard from my constituents, and they’re the ones who have to have their cars tested.’” [Star Tribune, 4/15/99]

Fischbach Voted To Eliminate The Program

Fischbach Voted To Eliminate The Program. “The Minnesota Senate voted 55-9 Wednesday to end the motor-vehicle emissions-testing program in the Twin Cities area on July 1, 2000. A “yes” vote was a vote to end the program. […] Republicans voting yes (23) Bill Belanger, Bloomington; Dick Day, Owatonna; Steve Dille, Dassel; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville; Dean Johnson, Willmar; Sheila Kiscaden, Rochester; Dave Kleis, St. Cloud; David Knutson, Burnsville; Gary Laigd; Stillwater; Cal Larson, Fergus Falls; Arlene Lesewski, Marshall; Warren Limmer, Maple Grove; Tom Neuville, Northfield; Ed Oliver, Deephaven; Gen Olson, Minnetrista; Mark Ourada, Buffalo; Pat Pariseau, Farmington; Martha Robertson, Minnetonka; Claire Robling, Prior Lake; Linda Runbeck, Circle Pines; Kenrick Schevel, Preston; Dan Stevens, Mora; Don Ziegler, Elmore.” [Star Tribune, 4/15/99]

Public Health


2007: Minnesota Health Commissioner Dianne Mandernach Delayed The Release Of Data On A Type Of Cancer Called Mesothelioma That Caused The Death Of 35 Miners In Iron Range, Minnesota

2007: Minnesota Health Commissioner Dianne Mandernach Delayed The Release Of Data On A Type Of Mesothelioma That May Caused The Death Of 35 Miners In Iron Range, Minnesota

“Minnesota’s health commissioner apologized again Tuesday for the delayed release of cancer data that could implicate the dust or other hazards of taconite mining in the deaths of dozens of Iron Range miners. ‘It was a mistake I truly regret. I especially want to apologize to the Iron Range community. This information is critically important to them,’ Dianne Mandernach said during a four-hour public hearing in which she faced lawmakers who last week called for her firing. At issue are data on 35 former miners who died of a rare cancer, mesothelioma, which is almost exclusively caused by the ingestion of asbestos or asbestos-like fibers. Officials with the Minnesota Department of Health learned of the cases in March 2006 but waited to release the information until March 2007 when they were prepared to discuss further research plans.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/26/07]

2003: A State Study Showed That 17 Former Miners Had Mesothelioma, And That It Was Likely Linked To Asbestos Exposure. “A state health study in 2003 announced 17 former miners had mesothelioma, a slow-growing but deadly cancer that damages the lining of the lungs. At the time, health officials said the cancers were likely linked to asbestos exposure common to many industries, not just mining.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/26/07]

Mandernach’s Critics Said The Delay Was Unacceptable And Was Putting Miners At Risk, But Fischbach Continued To Defend Mandernach

Critics Said Mandernach’s Delay Was Unacceptable, As 4,000 Miners Were At Risk Of Being Exposed To Harmful Substances. “Lawmakers at the hearing described the delay as an ‘unacceptable’ and ‘mind-boggling’ betrayal of public trust. Sen. David Tomassoni, DFL-Chisholm, said that Mandernach should resign after the
meeting if she alone made the decision, but he joined other Democratic-Farmer-Labor lawmakers in questioning whether the governor was involved. ‘We have 4,000 people in these mines,’ Tomassoni said. ‘They are being exposed to something. They don’t know what it is.’” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/26/07]

**Fischbach Defended Mandernach And Said Mandernach’s Critics Were Playing “Political Games,” And Argued That The Harmful Effects Of Mining Dust Should Have Been Studied Earlier.** “Mandernach used the word ‘mistake’ more than a dozen times but defended the integrity of an agency that in the past two years has quickly notified the public about child flu deaths, a hepatitis A outbreak and the dangers of lead charms. She also noted that lawmakers denied funding requests since the early 1990s to research the mining dust issue. Lawmakers approved funding in 1997 to track respiratory diseases among miners but cut the funding in 2002. Some of Mandernach’s chief critics, including Tomassoni and Rukavina, voted for the funding cut as part of a broader plan to close a billion-dollar budget deficit. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, pointed out these missed opportunities and criticized DFL lawmakers at the hearing for suggesting conspiracies. ‘It’s a political game to be sitting here accusing the commissioner of political games,’ she said.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/26/07]

### 2001: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Modernize Sewage And Septic Systems In St. Stephen, Minnesota

2001: **Fischbach Introduced Legislation Authorizing $8.6 Million In Bond Funding To Modernize St. Stephen, Minnesota’s Sewage And Septic Systems.** “St. Stephen residents could move a step closer to having city water and sewer services if the Legislature coughs up some cash. The cash needed is $8.6 million, and it’s being requested as a bonding item in a bill introduced this session by Rep. Steve Dehler, R-St. Joseph, and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. The overall price tag of the system, which would replace the septic system and wells residents have now, would be in the neighborhood of $14 million after inflation is figured in. […] The system has been presented to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, but work has not been started, Supan said. The MPCA has not responded to the city’s plans, she said. So far, no problems have been reported with the septic systems and wells, making the improvements more of a preventative measure. If the city keeps growing, improvements will be needed, Supan said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/4/01]
### Equal Rights & Workplace Fairness

**Significant Findings**

- In 2014, Fischbach voted in favor of the Women’s Economic Security Act, which required companies with state government contracts to pay men and women similarly for work.

### Equal Pay

**2014: Fischbach Voted In Favor Of Equal Pay For Women**

2014: Fischbach Voted For The Women’s Economic Security Act, Which Required Companies With State Government Contracts To Pay Men And Women Similarly For Work. “The Minnesota Senate approved legislation Wednesday to expand workplace protections for women, including provisions aimed at leveling pay and accommodating pregnancies. […] Sens. Michelle Fischbach and John Pederson supported it; Sens. Bruce Anderson, Dave Brown and Paul Gazelka opposed it. The legislation, dubbed the Women’s Economic Security Act, would require many companies with state government contracts to certify they pay men and women similarly for similar work. It would prevent companies from retaliating against employees who openly discuss wage disparities. And it provides longer leave time for new mothers and fathers.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/24/14]
FEMA & Disaster Relief Issues

**Significant Findings**

- In 2012, after a mill exploded in her district in Sartell, Fischbach insisted that aid in response to the disaster should be targeted towards keeping the mill and the jobs that it created within the district.

- However, Fischbach’s efforts failed, as the company announced that they would not be re-opening the mill in Sartell.

**Disaster Relief**

2012: After A Mill Exploded In Her District, Fischbach Insisted That Aid In Response To The Disaster Should Be Targeted Towards Keeping The Mill In Her District

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2012: After A Mill Exploded In Her District, Fischbach Insisted That Aid In Response To The Disaster Should Be Targeted Towards Keeping The Mill In Her District. “Gov. Mark Dayton’s office has voiced interest in providing state aid in response to the Verso mill explosion as the governor prepares to convene a special legislative session to respond to floods in the Duluth area. What form such aid might take or who the recipients would be remain open questions. But the state senator who represents Sartell, Sen. Michelle Fischbach, says aid should be targeted to keep the Verso mill operating in Sartell. […] Fischbach, R-Paynesville, declined to say who she’d prefer to be the recipient of a potential legislative appropriation to respond to the Verso explosion. But she said such an appropriation should be focused on retaining the mill and its jobs in Sartell. Rep. Tim O’Driscoll, R-Sartell, said he envisions state aid could be supplied to Verso, as well as to the city of Sartell and other agencies for costs to respond to the explosion. Whether aid would be supplied to Verso could hinge on what” [St. Cloud Times, 7/8/12]

After Versa Announced That It Would Not Be Opening A New Plant In Sartell, Fischbach Vowed To Do All She Could To Attract New Businesses To The Old Mill Site

After Versa Announced That It Would Not Be Opening A New Plant In Sartell, Fischbach Vowed To Do All She Could To Attract New Businesses To The Old Mill Site. “After Thursday brought an answer about the future of Sartell’s Verso paper mill, local, state and federal officials gathered Friday to mull a question: What next? Verso announced Thursday that it won’t reopen its Sartell mill - employer of more than 250 workers, key player in Minnesota’s timber industry and a Sartell fixture for more than a century - after a fatal Memorial Day explosion halted its operations. […] Area legislators, including Reps. Tim O’Driscoll, R-Sartell, and Steve Gottwalt, R-St. Cloud, and Senate President Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said they’ll do everything possible to aid workers and bring jobs back to the mill site.” [St. Cloud Times, 8/4/12]

Fischbach Declined To Push For Verso-Related Legislation During A Special Legislative Session, Because She Said There Was Not “A Need Right Now”

“When the Minnesota Legislature convenes in special session Friday, don’t expect lawmakers to consider bills related to Sartell’s shuttered Verso Paper Corp. mill, area lawmakers say. Gov. Mark Dayton on Wednesday called a special legislative session for Friday afternoon, primarily to provide aid related to recent floods in the Duluth area. […] But Verso’s announcement earlier this month that it would permanently close the mill, coupled with a
clearer picture of the benefits available to laid-off Verso workers, have made it unlikely that any Verso-related bills will be offered or passed during the special session. That’s according to Senate President Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Reps. Tim O’Driscoll, R-Sartell, and King Banaian, R-St. Cloud. An agreement between legislative leaders and Dayton on what will be considered in the special session doesn’t include aid related to Verso. ‘I don’t expect anything on Verso, because we’ve covered those bases,’ Fischbach said. ‘There isn’t a need right now.’” [St. Cloud Times, 8/23/12]
Foreign Policy Issues

**Significant Findings**

✓ Fischbach praised Donald Trump for taking “decisive action” on Iran, after he ordered the assassination of Iran’s top general.

✓ After Rep. Colin Peterson voted for the War Powers Resolution to constrain Trump’s ability to wage unilateral military action against Iran, Fischbach accused Trump of “defending Iran.”

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**Iran**

### Fischbach Praised Donald Trump For Taking “Decisive Action” On Iran

Fischbach Said That Although She Hadn’t Spoken To Constituents About It, She Believed They Would Appreciate Donald Trump’s “Decisive Action” On Iran. “You know we get a few, we get a few questions about foreign policy, but mainly domestic. But I think that I think that, and I haven’t I haven’t talked to constituents specifically about it, but I think that they would probably appreciate Donald Trump’s decisive action on what was going on in Iran.” [Beers with Blois, Michelle Fischbach Interview, 1/3/20]

**January 2020: Trump Ordered The Assassination Of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani Via Drone Strike.** “A U.S. airstrike killed Soleimani, 62, and others as they traveled from Baghdad’s international airport early Friday morning. The Pentagon said President Donald Trump ordered the U.S. military to take ‘decisive defensive action to protect U.S. personnel abroad by killing’ a man once referred to by Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as a ‘living martyr of the revolution.” [Associated Press, 1/2/20]

### In The Wake Of Passage Of The War Powers Resolution With Regards To Iran, Fischbach Accused Colin Peterson And Democrats Of “Defending Iran”

In The Wake Of Passage Of The War Powers Resolution With Regards To Iran, Fischbach Accused Colin Peterson And Democrats Of “Defending Iran.” “Collin Peterson yesterday voted with nearly every House Democrat, including Iran sympathizer Ilhan Omar, in rebuking President Trump’s decisive action against Iran. Democrats should stop defending Iran and help President Trump keep America safe! #MN07” [Twitter, Michelle Fischbach, 1/10/20]
Collin Peterson yesterday voted with nearly every House Democrat, including Iran sympathizer Ilhan Omar, in rebuking President Trump’s decisive action against Iran.

Democrats should stop defending Iran and help President Trump keep America safe! #MN07

H.Con.Res.83 Directed Trump To “Terminate The Use Of United States Armed Forces To Engage In Hostilities In Or Against Iran.” [Congress.gov, accessed 1/17/20]
**Gun Issues**

### Significant Findings

- **In 1996,** Fischbach supported repealing “all state bans and measures restricting law-abiding citizens from obtaining firearms.”
- **In 2005,** Fischbach voted for a bill allowing adults age 21 or older to have conceal carry permits.
- **In 2001,** Fischbach voted against an NRA-opposed bill to strengthen standards for handgun permits. The NRA warned and threatened members who planned to vote for the bill.
- **In 2001,** Fischbach voted for a bill that guaranteed conceal carry permits to anyone who passed a background check, did not have serious mental health issues, and was trained.

### Background Checks

**Fischbach Supported Repealing All State Bans And Measures That Restricted Law-Abiding Citizens From Obtaining Firearms**

1996: **Fischbach Supported Repealing All State Bans And Measures That Restricted Law-Abiding Citizens From Obtaining Firearms.** According to Vote Smart, Fischbach supported “eas[ing] state procedures and restrictions on the purchase and registration of firearms” and “repeal[ing] all state bans and measures that restrict law-abiding citizens from obtaining firearms.” [Vote Smart, Minnesota State Legislative Election 1996 National Political Awareness Test, accessed 8/14/19]

### NRA

**Fischbach Was Endorsed By The NRA**

Fischbach Was Endorsed By The NRA. According to Fischbach’s SD 13 website, she was endorsed by the NRA. [Friends of Michelle Fischbach, accessed 8/14/19]

### Concealed Carry

**2005: Fischbach Voted To Ease Conceal-Carry Restrictions In Minnesota**

2005: **The Minnesota Senate Passed A Bill To Allow Adults 21 Years Or Older To Carry Concealed Weapons If They Paid A Fee And Passed A Background Check.** “Most adult Minnesotans would once again be guaranteed a permit to carry handguns in public, if a bill the Senate approved Friday becomes law. Senators voted 44-21 to approve SF2259, the so-called ‘Conceal and Carry’ handgun bill. […] It would guarantee a permit to adults older than 21 who receive required training, pay a fee and pass a background check. The bill would replace the current law, which gives law enforcement officials the right to deny permits to applicants at their discretion. It would reinstate a law the Legislature approved in 2003, which the courts have found to be unconstitutional because it was attached to an unrelated bill to obtain a vote.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/14/05]
2001: Fischbach Voted For An NRA-Backed Bill To Weaken Concealed Carry Laws In Minnesota

2001: The NRA Backed A Bill To Guarantee Concealed Carry Permits To Anyone Who Passed A Criminal Background Check, Did Not Have Severe Mental Health Issues, And Was Trained. “In the weeks leading up to Tuesday’s vote on an emotionally charged concealed weapons bill, Sen. Steve Murphy had what he calls ‘a massive attack of conscience.’ Murphy, a Democrat from Red Wing who was endorsed last year by the National Rifle Association, decided to part company with the NRA and local gun-rights supporters in their drive to win wider access to concealed weapons permits in Minnesota. […] He backed out of his previous commitment to supporters of the bill, he said. Instead, he led the opposition to the NRA position on the Senate floor and won the battle by a two-vote margin. The vote apparently spelled the end this year for the NRA-backed attempt to rewrite the law to guarantee concealed-carry permits to everyone who passes criminal background checks, has no severe mental problems and is properly trained in the use of the weapon. Current Minnesota law limits access to concealed-weapons permits by requiring applicants to prove they have an occupational or a public safety need to carry a loaded weapon in public places. The law gives chiefs broad discretion in deciding who gets to carry weapons in their communities.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/17/01]

Fischbach Supported The Bill

Fischbach Voted In Favor Of The Bill. “Voted ‘yes’ […] Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/17/01]

2001: Fischbach Voted Against An NRA-Opposed Bill To Strengthen Standards For Handgun Permits

2001: The Minnesota State Senate Defeated A Provision To Raise The Age For Handgun Permits, Require Stricter Training, And Order Statewide Data Collection On The Permit Process. “By a razor-thin margin, the Senate defeated an effort Tuesday to make permits to carry handguns available to more Minnesotans, apparently ending the initiative for this legislative session. But despite the Senate’s 34-32 vote to retain broad discretion for police chiefs and sheriffs to issue or deny permits, gun-rights advocates promised to return next year with another push for Minnesota to join 33 other states with less restrictive laws regarding permits to carry handguns. […] It would have required more training for permit applicants, raised the minimum age from 18 to 21 and ordered statewide data collection on the permit process while retaining chiefs’ and sheriffs’ discretion over issuance.” [Star Tribune, 5/16/01]

The NRA Opposed The Legislation And Threatened Members Who Planned To Vote For It. “Each senator had been delivered an NRA warning that a vote for any amendment to Pariseau’s bill ‘will be a vote against the NRA and its members in your district.’ Murphy, however, waved his NRA membership card as he proposed his amendment, saying: ‘Let’s not be afraid of the NRA, but let’s be afraid of ‘shall issue,’ ” a term for less restrictive gun laws.” [Star Tribune, 5/16/01]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “Republicans voting no (22) Michele Bachmann, Stillwater; Charlie Berg, Chokio; Dick Day, Owatonna; Steve Dille, Dassel; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville; Dennis Frederickson, New Ulm; Debbie Johnson, Ham Lake; Bob Kierlin, Winona; Dave Kleis, St. Cloud; David Knutson, Burnsville; Cal Larson, Fergus Falls; Arlene Lesewski, Marshall; Warren Limmer, Maple Grove; Tom Neuville, Northfield; Gen Olson, Minnetrista; Mark Ourada, Buffalo; Pat Pariseau, Farmington; Mady Reiter, Shoreview; Claire Robling, Prior Lake; Kenric Scheevel, Preston; Grace Schwab, Albert Lea; Dan Stevens, Mora.” [Star Tribune, 5/16/01]
Health Care Issues

**Significant Findings**

✓ In 2018, Fischbach and her running mate campaigned on moving Minnesota away from the Affordable Care Act, towards a more private health insurance market.

✓ In 2016, Fischbach held an event with Rep. Tom Emmer on the “pitfalls” of the ACA.

✓ During her 2020 campaign, Fischbach ran on moving America’s health care system towards a “real market.”

✓ In 2006, Fischbach suggested that insurance companies should be allowed to profit in order to lower costs, even though insurance profits were illegal at the time in Minnesota.

✓ In 2000, Fischbach supported Medical Savings Accounts, a precursor to tax savings accounts, which were phased out by Congress in 2003.

**Affordable Care Act**

2020: Fischbach Said She Wanted To See America’s Health Care System Adopt More Transparency And Become More Of A “Real Market”

2020: Fischbach Said She Wanted To See America’s Health Care System Adopt More Transparency And Become More Of A “Real Market.” “You know, I would talk about the tren...excuse me, the access issue, and making sure...you know. I know that most recently there’s been a lot of discussion about mental healthcare access in rural Minnesota. But I think there are some ideas you know, regarding telemedicine and making and maybe incentives to bring doctors general practitioners out. Things like that. But in addition to that, I think there’s some reforms that need they need like the transparency, and cost transparency, and so that so that it becomes more of a real market. A real...as opposed to just kind of this...the healthcare. But so that people understand what the costs are, what the, what the, and they’ll have some responsibility to take a look at, okay this...is these tests are very expensive and I only need one of them. That type of thing . So I think that’s a big one, the transparency. But like I said access is gonna be a big one because I think rural Minnesota does have some issues with that, and some concerns about that. Making sure that we’ve got that taken care of.” [Beers with Blois, Michelle Fischbach Interview, 1/3/20]

2018: Fischbach And Her Running Mate Campaigned On Moving Away From The Affordable Care Act And Embracing A Free Market Health Care System

2018: Fischbach And Her Running Mate Campaigned On Moving Away From The Affordable Care Act And Embracing A Free Market Health Care System. “Pawlenty and Fischbach also highlighted their support for stringent immigration enforcement, medical care price transparency, and moving Minnesota away from Affordable Care Act-related provisions toward a more private health insurance market. Pawlenty emphasized his support for repealing the state’s taxes on Social Security benefits, as Minnesota is one of only a few states to do so.” [Free Press, 6/4/18]
2016: Fischbach Attended An Event With Rep. Tom Emmer On The “Pitfalls” Of The Affordable Care Act


2012: Fischbach Supported Building A State Health Care Exchange Under Obamacare, Which Many Republicans Opposed

“Though she’s front-and-center among the GOP leadership, Fischbach says there’s at least one issue on which she doesn’t agree with many in her party. She supports building a state health care exchange under President Barack Obama’s health care law, which many of her fellow Republicans oppose. Fischbach says it’s important to build the exchange - envisioned as a one-stop online shop for individuals and small businesses to shop for health coverage - to ensure Minnesotans, not federal officials, determine the exchange parameters.” [St. Cloud Times, 9/29/12]

2007: Fischbach Vowed To Fight Against Universal Health Care Efforts

“Back at the Legislature, Fischbach says she expects she’ll be putting in a lot of time working against single-payer, universal health care proposals. ‘When it comes to regulating health care, you make one little change and there are significant impacts. I’m a strong believer that folks should have a say in their health care decisions. It shouldn’t be coming from the government or the state.”’ [Finance & Commerce, 11/21/07]

Insurance Premiums

2018: Fischbach Helped Pass Legislation That Provided Health Insurance Premium Relief

“In addition, Fischbach served on the Senate Health and Human Services Finance and Policy Committee, which was instrumental in passing legislation providing health insurance premium relief, making health care more affordable for Minnesotans shopping on the individual market.” [Governor Dayton of Minnesota, Press Release, 5/25/18]

The State Of Minnesota Established A Program To Provide A 25 Percent Subsidy To Health Insurance Premiums Of Eligible Minnesota Residents. “In January 2017, the State of Minnesota established a program to provide a 25 percent subsidy to the health insurance premiums of eligible Minnesota residents who purchased health care coverage in the individual market in 2017. The state, through the Minnesota Department of Management and Budget (MMB), paid health insurance carriers about $137 million dollars on behalf of 118,000 Minnesota residents who were deemed eligible for this premium subsidy program.” [Office of the Legislative Auditor – State of Minnesota, 5/7/18]

Fischbach Said She Could Support A Proposal To Increase State Revenue Through A Medical Assistance Surcharge On Health Providers

“Fischbach and Rep. Larry Hosch, DFL-St. Joseph, said legislators and the
Dayton administration held talks about generating new revenue through a Medical Assistance surcharge on health providers. Fischbach said the discussions occurred between the top legislators on health care finance, Sen. David Hann, R-Eden Prairie, and Rep. Jim Abeler, R-Anoka, and Department of Human Services Commissioner Lucinda Jesson. […] Fischbach declined to share more details about the provider surcharges, but hinted she could support such a proposal, if structured properly.” [St. Cloud Times, 7/2/11]

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<td>2006: Fischbach Suggested Allowing Insurance Companies To Make A Profit To Increase Competition. “Quality needs to stay high as the state looks to reduce costs and make health care more accessible, she said. There might be some public and private solutions, she said, and she suggests allowing insurance companies to make a profit, something that is illegal in Minnesota. ‘You make them more competitive. You put them into the market where they have to be competitive,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 11/2/06]</td>
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<td>2006: Fischbach Supported Reducing Government Mandates For MinnesotaCare, And Providing Tax Credits For People Who Bought Insurance. “Fischbach said improving the health care system, reducing costs and improving access will take a solution developed by both the public and private sectors. Government needs to reduce mandates and provide tax incentives to those who want to buy health insurance. MinnesotaCare, an insurance program for low-income people, is intended to provide insurance for those who don’t have it, she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/13/06]</td>
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<td>2005: The Minnesota State Senate Passed A Bill To Lift The State’s $5,000 Outpatient Health Insurance Spending Cap For Adults Who Did Not Have Children And Were Enrolled In MinnesotaCare. “On a bipartisan vote, the Minnesota Senate overwhelmingly voted Thursday to lift a health-care spending cap on childless adults on MinnesotaCare. Backers said the current $5,000 cap on outpatient care was unfair rationing and stopping terminally ill Minnesotans from getting the care they need. ‘This is a concern for people all over the state of Minnesota,’ said Sen. Linda Berglin, DFL-Minneapolis, the chief sponsor of the measure. ‘This is the right thing to do medically, it is the right thing to do morally.’ Lifting the cap—imposed during the budget crunch of 2003—would cost about $50 million over the next two years. The cap only applies to adults without children who receive medical insurance through MinnesotaCare. The money would come from a special fund, financed through fees on doctors and hospitals, set up to pay for health care for low-income Minnesotans. That fund currently has a surplus and would continue to have a surplus if the cap were lifted, Berglin said.” [Pioneer Press, 4/1/05]</td>
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Fischbach Opposed The Bill And Said it Should Have Been Part Of A Larger Budget Bill. “But several senators said the measure was inappropriate because it only deals with a piece of the state’s overall budget picture.
We are doing this piecemeal,” said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. “This proposal should be part of the bigger budget bill.” [Pioneer Press, 4/1/05]

### 2003: Fischbach Supported A Health And Human Services Bill That Made Drastic Cuts To Health Care And Minnesota’s Social Safety Net

### 2003: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Bill, Mostly Backed By Republicans, That Made Drastic Cuts To Health Care And Minnesota’s Social Safety Net

A health and human services bill that many Republican lawmakers hailed as a major step in reforming government spending and that many Democratic-Farmer-Labor lawmakers derided as a ruthless dismantling of the state’s safety net was passed Thursday. The debate over the bill, which finances Minnesota’s welfare, health care and social service programs, has been long, involved and emotional. […] Republican supporters say the bill cuts spending but maintains a core of services for the most vulnerable state residents and spares deep cuts to nursing homes and programs for the developmentally disabled. They refute DFLers’ claims that the thinned-out spending bill lacks compassion and leaves the most vulnerable without support.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/30/03]

The Bill, Which Was Overwhelmingly Backed By Republicans And Had Little DFL Support, Passed In The Senate On A 34-28 Vote. “The Republican-controlled House Thursday afternoon passed the bill after three hours of debate on a 78-54 vote. The DFL Senate passed the bill a few hours later, 34-28. Senate DFLers offered the bill just three votes; Republicans provided the rest.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/30/03]

### Vulnerable Constituents Lobbied Lawmakers To Maintain Funding Levels For Critical Programs

Vulnerable Constituents, Including Seniors And Autistic Children Lobbied Lawmakers Maintain Funding For Critical Programs. “Hundreds of people affected by the health and human services budget, ranging from senior volunteers to autistic children, pleaded without success for lawmakers to provide the funds it would take to maintain their programs at current levels. Legislators and staffers spent dozens of late nights working through the bill’s details, and for 10 days leaders in the House and Senate said they were close to a deal.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/30/03]

The Bill Cut About $1 Billion From The Budget, Including Cuts To Child Care Programs And Social Security Cash; It Also Raised Health Insurance Premiums By $5.3 Million

The Bill Cut About $1 Billion From The Budget, Including Cuts To Child Care Programs, Health Care For Undocumented Immigrants, And Social Security Cash Payments; It Also Raised Health Insurance Premiums By $5.3 Million. “The bill cuts about $1 billion from the expected budget it would take to maintain the current level of health and welfare programs over the next two years. […] The major changes include: -- Cutting health care programs for adults without children and reducing coverage to those in the programs, saving $104 million.-- Reducing state-subsidized child care assistance and eliminating eligibility to parents and families making more than 175 percent of poverty ($26,000 for a family of three), saving $80 million.—Creating a ‘work-first’ diversionary program for most welfare recipients. They will have to look for jobs before they receive cash benefits.— Eliminating basic health care coverage for undocumented children and adults but keeping prenatal services for undocumented pregnant women.—Creating a discount drug prescription program for low- and moderate-income individuals who do not have prescription coverage.—Increasing, by $1.9 million, funding for mental health care and screening for children.—Increasing parental fees for child care assistance, saving $11.3 million.—Reducing reimbursement rates to hospitals, saving $34.7 million.—Raising health care insurance premiums by $5.3 million for individuals and families covered under the MinnesotaCare program.—Cutting, by 15 percent, funding to Meals on Wheels and a range of other home-based senior citizen programs and services that were facing steeper cuts.—
Reducing, by at least $125 a month, the cash benefits for family members who receive both Social Security and welfare payments.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/30/03]

**Fischbach Supported The Bill, And Claimed It Had “A Lot Of Compromise In It”**

In a one-hour Senate floor debate, several GOP senators said the bill would not bring the misery and suffering Democrats portended. ‘This bill does have a lot of compromise in it … . There is good and reasonable reform in this bill, too. And I would just like to say if Sen. Berglin doesn’t want to carry this bill, I would be proud to be the author of this bill,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 5/30/03]

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### Prescription Drugs

**Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Try To Make It Harder To Purchase Prescription Drugs Online, But Critics Questioned How Effective The Policy Would Be**

**2007: Fischbach Introduced Legislation Making It Harder To Order Prescription Drugs Online, By Outlawing Online Outfits That Relied Solely On Online Questionnaires To Sell Drugs To Patients**

State Rep. Justin Pearson Introduced Legislation Making It Harder To Order Prescription Drugs Online, By Outlawing Online Outfits That Relied Solely On Online Questionnaires To Sell Drugs To Patients. “Justin Pearson died Christmas Day from complications due to his abuse of prescription medications obtained through the Internet, his father, Dan Pearson, told state lawmakers Monday morning. Pearson of Clearwater said it’s so easy for people to order highly addictive medications such as Vicodin, OxyContin and Percocet online that the state needs to step in and regulate the process. That way, fewer families will experience what his has, he said. ‘Because of these online pharmacies and the way they operate, I won’t experience his adult life,’ Pearson said of Justin, who died at age 24. ‘I won’t see him get married. I won’t ever meet his grandchildren.’ Pearson testified on behalf of a bill from Rep. Steve Gottwalt, R-St. Cloud, that would make it more difficult for Minnesota pharmacies to receive and fulfill orders for prescriptions from third-party companies that market themselves and take orders over the Internet. Pearson cited a report released last month from John Walters, director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, that said unintended deaths related to prescription medication rose 91 percent from 1999-2002, and noted the rise in unintended prescription painkiller deaths mirrored an increase in sales of the drugs. […] Gottwalt’s bill would change the definition pharmacies use to determine the validity of orders to exclude those based solely on an online questionnaire.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/20/07]

**Fischbach Introduced Companion Legislation In The Senate.** “The House Health and Human Services committee recommended the bill to pass and sent it on to a potential floor vote later this session. A companion Senate bill from Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, has yet to receive a hearing.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/20/07]

... But, Critics Questioned The Effectiveness Of The Policy, Since It Would Put Pharmacies In A Difficult Position With Limited Transparency

**Critics Questioned The Effectiveness Of The Policy, Since Pharmacies Would Not Necessarily Be Able To Know About The Relationship That Patients Had With Their Doctors.** “Some committee members questioned if the language change would accomplish much besides putting pharmacies in a more difficult legal position. ‘I’m uncomfortable with this,’ said Rep. Tina Liebling, DFL-Rochester. ‘I don’t know how the pharmacist is going to be able to know everything about the relationships between a doctor and their patient.’ Gottwalt said he ran the bill past the Minnesota Board of Pharmacy and the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice, and both thought the bill would give regulatory agencies and law enforcement a useful tool.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/20/07]
Fischbach Supported The I-SaveRx Drug Reimportation Plan To Allow Minnesotans To Place Online Orders For 120 Name-Brand Drugs From Canada, Ireland, And The United Kingdom. “Minnesotans would be able to order prescription drugs directly from Canada and parts of Europe on the Internet and at a discount if a proposal Senate Republicans announced Thursday becomes law. Minnesota should join five other states in an Internet prescription drug reimportation plan called I-SaveRx organized by Illinois last fall, said Senate Minority Leader Dick Day, R-Owatonna. Day was joined by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Sen. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud. The plan would allow Minnesotans to order 120 name-brand prescription drugs from about 60 pharmacies in Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom at 20 percent to 50 percent less than what the medications cost in America, Kleis said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/05]

2006: The Illinois Auditor General Found That The I-SaveRx Program Put Patients At Risk Of Buying Drugs From Outfits that Were Not Certified Pharmacies. “In 2006, the Illinois Auditor General reviewed iSaveRX and found a number of problems: 40% of the required inspections of the foreign entities claiming to be pharmacies were never completed, putting patients at risk of getting medication from an entity that may not have any pharmacy license at all. Many of the inspection forms were unreadable by auditors.” [Partnership for Safe Medicines, 11/6/15]

Hospitals

2005: Fischbach Voted Against Opening A New Hospital In Maple Grove

2005: Fischbach Voted Against Opening A New Hospital In Maple Grove. “St. Cloud-area lawmakers Thursday provided two of the few votes against a bill to allow construction of a new hospital in Maple Grove. Senate members voted 62-4 to exempt the city - a Twin Cities suburb 50 miles southeast of St. Cloud - from a statewide moratorium on new hospital beds that has been in place since 1984. Supporters pointed to a Minnesota Department of Health study that shows a need for more hospital beds in the northwest metro area, especially for child and adolescent mental-health treatment. Opponents, including Sen. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud, said the Legislature should stop picking and choosing who gets a new hospital. Requests to exempt the St. Cloud area from the moratorium so Abbott Northwestern/Allina Health Systems can build a new hospital in Sartell have failed at the Legislature for several years. ‘Let’s lift the moratorium. Let’s let the market determine who is going to build in Maple Grove and anywhere else, for that matter,’ Kleis said. ‘It shouldn’t be the Legislature’s decision to make.’ Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, also opposed the bill.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/20/05]

2004: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Authorizing A Study Of The Effects Of Lifting Minnesota’s Moratorium On Hospital Construction

2004: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Authorizing A Study Of The Effects Of Lifting Minnesota’s Moratorium On Hospital Construction; The Bill Passed 54-8. “Legislation paving the way for a study of whether a second hospital is needed in the St. Cloud area is headed to the governor’s office for a possible signature. The Senate passed the bill 54-8 Wednesday. Its author is Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/13/04]

The Bill Directed Minnesota’s Department Of Health To Study The Effects Of Lifting The State’s Moratorium On Hospital Construction, And Report Its Findings To The Legislature. “The bill requires the state Department of Health to study requests to lift a statewide moratorium on hospital construction. Hospitals requesting an exemption would pay the cost of the study, which would include need for a new hospital and the impact on existing facilities. The health department would report the information to the Legislature, which would make the final decision.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/13/04]
2003: After Caving To Pressure From Lobbyists, Fischbach Opposed Opening A New Hospital in Sartell, Minnesota

2003: Lobbyists From The Health Care Sector Lobbied State Legislators To Lift Minnesota’s Moratorium On New Hospital Beds, In Order To Open A New Hospital In Sartell

2003: Lobbyists From Abbott Northwestern Lobbied To Lift A Minnesota Moratorium On New Hospital Beds, While Lobbyists From CentraCare Health System Lobbied To Keep The Moratorium In Place. “St. Cloud-area lawmakers are feeling pressure from Abbott Northwestern and CentraCare during a session viewed as a critical time in the second-hospital debate. Lobbyists for each side have worked hard to win over legislators, Abbott Northwestern officials are hunting for a lawmaker to sponsor a bill to lift the statewide moratorium on new hospital beds. ‘They’re much more aggressive this year,’ said Rep. Doug Stang, R-Cold Spring. Central Minnesota legislators will gather today at the Capitol in a closed meeting to discuss the issue. So far, none has stepped forward to sponsor the necessary bill to lift the moratorium. If legislation is to have a chance of passage this year, it must be introduced soon. Bills must be approved by all policy committees in either the House or Senate by April 4 to be considered further this session.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/03]

Proponents Of Lifting The Moratorium Wanted It Lifted In Order To Allow A New Abbott Northwestern Hospital To Be Built. “The Legislature frequently passes bills to lift the moratorium for small expansions, and one such bill for Carver County has been introduced this session. A bill to allow construction of a new hospital would be unusual. David Frank, Abbott Northwestern’s Sartell administrator, said he believes it’s a good year to be discussing the hospital issue despite the state’s budget deficit. Abbott isn’t asking for any money, he said, and a new hospital would spur economic development. Rep. Lynda Boudreau, chairwoman of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee, said she is open to scheduling hearings on bills to lift the moratorium. Boudreau, R-Faribault, said she’ll consider whether a new hospital is needed based on the area’s population, if there is community support and if a new hospital would complement or compete with existing ones. ‘Competition is certainly good, but I think you need to have some kind of agreement within your community that another hospital is needed,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/03]

The Hospital Would Have Been Located In Fischbach’s District

Fischbach Said There Were A “Lot Of Things To Consider” Regarding The Hospital, Which Would Have Been Located In Her District. “The two legislators who represent Sartell - Sen. Michelle Fischbach and Rep. Dan Severson - both say they’re still undecided. There are ‘a lot of things to consider,’ said Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who serves on the Senate Health and Family Security Committee.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/03]

Fischbach Ultimately Opposed The Opening Of The New Hospital

Fischbach Opposed The Opening Of The New Hospital, Arguing That It Might Drain Patients From A Competing St. Cloud Hospital. “Rep. Dan Severson, R-Sauk Rapids, and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said there are too many unanswered questions about how a second hospital would affect local health care and St. Cloud Hospital. The two represent Sartell, where Abbott wants to build a 95-bed hospital near Minnesota Highway 15. The project requires an exemption from the statewide moratorium on new hospital beds. CentraCare Health System, which operates St. Cloud Hospital, opposes Abbott’s plans. Both sides have heavily lobbied St. Cloud-area legislators. ‘There was a lot of issues that couldn’t be answered,’ Fischbach said, including whether a second hospital would supplement the area’s existing health-care centers or whether it would drain patients from St. Cloud Hospital.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/20/03]

Fischbach Said Health Care Was Not A Free Market Since Hospitals Got Government Reimbursements. “Health care is not a free market, Fischbach noted, because of the state and federal reimbursements hospitals receive. ‘It’s not like Starbucks vs. Caribou (coffee shops),’ she said. ‘It’s highly regulated by the government …
Since we can’t see five years into the future, it concerned us about going into … the exemption without really knowing what’s going to happen.”” [St. Cloud Times, 3/20/03]

Critics Said Fischbach Did Not Vote In The Interests Of Her Constituents

Critics Said Fischbach Voted Against Her Constituents’ Interests By Opposing The New Hospital. “St. Cloud Hospital President Craig Broman said he is pleased with the legislators’ decision, but he is still concerned an exception to the moratorium could still be introduced at the Legislature. ‘We’re not out of the woods yet,’ Broman said. ‘We must continue to represent our concerns to the public and ask for community support on this issue.’” Mark Thelen, owner of Thelen Advertising in St. Cloud and a member of Abbott’s community advisory board, say he thinks Fischbach and Severson will pay a political price for their decision. ‘If they listened to their constituents other than those who are CentraCare employees, they would have heard 80 to 90 percent of the people wanted this option in health care,’ Thelen said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/21/03]

After Initially Opposing The New Hospital, Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Study The Need For A Second Hospital

March 2003: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Require The Minnesota Health Commissioner To Issue A Study On The Need For A New Abbott Hospital In Sartell. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, introduced a bill Wednesday that would require the state health commissioner to complete a study and report to the Legislature by Jan. 15. Last week, Fischbach and Rep. Dan Severson, R-Sauk Rapids, announced they would not support a bill lifting the moratorium on new hospital beds in the state so Abbott Northwestern can build a 95-bed hospital in Sartell. ‘I think we want to continue to look into it, and maybe be able to answer some of those unanswered questions that we had,’ Fischbach said.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/27/03]

Fischbach’s Bill Did Not Specify Who Would Pay For The Study, And Critics Questioned Whether Or Not It Would Be Successful. “A bill calling for a study was introduced three years ago, but received little support in the Legislature. Fischbach’s bill does not specify who would pay for the study, and it could be a tough sell in tight financial times. She said she plans to address the cost issue later, but hopes that the health department could complete the study with existing staff. David Frank, administrator of Abbott Northwestern’s Sartell facility, said previously he thinks another study is unnecessary. ‘I think it’s good that it keeps this deal alive in people’s minds,’ he said Wednesday. But he questioned who will pay for the study, where it will be sent when it’s completed and what action it will lead to. Abbott Northwestern most probably would contribute financially to the study if asked, Frank said. Frank also notes that St. Cloud Hospital actively opposed the last bill calling for a study, so it’s unclear whether Fischbach’s bill will have better success.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/27/03]

2003: Fischbach Authored A Health Care Proposal To Reward Tax-Free Savings Accounts, Cap Medical Malpractice Payouts, And Freeze New Health Care Mandates


2003: Fischbach Sponsored A Health Care Proposal That Would Have Rewarded Tax-Free Savings Accounts, A Type Of Health Saving Account That Incentivized Purchasing High-Deductible Plans. “Tax-free savings accounts, caps on medical malpractice awards and a freeze on new mandates are part of a health-care proposal announced Wednesday by Senate Republicans. ‘The cost of health-care insurance is what people are really talking about,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, one of the bill’s authors. The plan would: Give favored tax treatment to health savings accounts, which allow people to contribute money to pay for health, dental and long-term care. The person is required to have a high-deductible health-insurance policy. The account holder makes decisions about when to spend the money.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/26/04]
The Plan Capped The Payouts For Medical Malpractice Lawsuits At $300,000

The Plan Capped The Payouts For Pain And Suffering Rewards In Medical Malpractice Lawsuits At $300,000. “Tax-free savings accounts, caps on medical malpractice awards and a freeze on new mandates are part of a health-care proposal announced Wednesday by Senate Republicans. ‘The cost of health-care insurance is what people are really talking about,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, one of the bill’s authors. The plan would: [...] Set a $300,000 cap on pain-and-suffering awards in medical malpractice lawsuits. It would not limit compensation for economic losses, such as wages.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/26/04]

The Plan Imposed A Moratorium On New Health Insurance Mandates, And Fischbach Claimed That A Statewide Mandate Could Raise Insurance Costs

The Plan Imposed A Moratorium On New Health Insurance Mandates. “Tax-free savings accounts, caps on medical malpractice awards and a freeze on new mandates are part of a health-care proposal announced Wednesday by Senate Republicans. ‘The cost of health-care insurance is what people are really talking about,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, one of the bill’s authors. The plan would: [...] Impose a moratorium on new health-care mandates while the state Department of Commerce studies their cost. Small businesses could offer a lower-cost, mandate-free plan with limited coverage.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/26/04]

Fischbach Claimed A Statewide Health Care Mandate Could Raise Insurance Costs, And Argued That Mandates Were Not Necessary For All Types Of Care. “‘We pass a mandate at the state level and we require a health-care insurance provider to cover that,’ Fischbach said. ‘A lot of the time that will cost more.’ She cited some examples of mandates that aren’t necessary for everyone, from maternity benefits and substance-abuse treatment to scalp-hair prostheses. A study would help officials determine how much the mandates cost, whether people are using them and whether some groups don’t need them, Fischbach said.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/26/04]

Fischbach Sponsored A Bill Asking To Study The Need For A Second Hospital In The St. Cloud Area, But Did Not Specify Who Would Pay For The Study

Fischbach Sponsored A Bill Asking For A Study On The Need For A Second Hospital In The St. Cloud Area. “A Central Minnesota legislator is asking for a study of the need for a second hospital in the St. Cloud area. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, introduced a bill Wednesday that would require the state health commissioner to complete a study and report to the Legislature by Jan. 15. Last week, Fischbach and Rep. Dan Severson, R-Sauk Rapids, announced they would not support a bill lifting the moratorium on new hospital beds in the state so Abbott Northwestern can build a 95-bed hospital in Sartell.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/27/03]

Fischbach’s Bill Did Not Specify Who Would Pay For The Study. “Fischbach’s bill does not specify who would pay for the study, and it could be a tough sell in tight financial times. She said she plans to address the cost issue later, but hopes that the health department could complete the study with existing staff.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/27/03]

Medical Savings Accounts

2000: Fischbach Supported Medical Savings Accounts, A Type Of Tax-Deductible Savings Accounts That Allowed People To Save For Health Care Costs

2000: Fischbach Supported Medical Savings Accounts. “Fischbach opposes 100 percent state funding of K-12 education, fearing a loss of local control. She also opposes further restrictions on personal watercraft and supports market-based solutions to rising health care costs, such as medical savings accounts.” [St. Cloud Times, 10/31/00]
Medical Savings Accounts Were Precursors To Health Savings Accounts, And Were Phased Out By Congress In 2003. “Medical savings accounts (MSA) were first created by several states in the early 1990s. By 1996, these plans became a federal pilot program within the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA). Medical savings accounts (MSA), which required annual Congress reauthorization, were phased out in 2003. Medical savings accounts (MSA) are the predecessors of health savings accounts (HSAs), which were established in 2003 as part of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act. MSAs and HSAs both have similar deductibles, tax treatment, and may have acted as retirement accounts. People who are covered by Medicare can still use MSAs.” [Investopedia, 8/28/19]

Medical Savings Accounts Were Tax-Deductible Savings Accounts That Allowed People To Invest For Health Care Spending. “Funding for medical savings accounts were made by the individual or by the employer, but not by both. MSAs were limited to the self-employed or employer groups with 50 or fewer employees who were enrolled in a high deductible health insurance plan (HDHP) and met other eligibility requirements. A medical savings account were tax-deductible savings accounts which the owner could use for qualified health expenses without incurring taxes or penalties. This would later apply to health savings accounts after they replaced MSAs. Both require the coupling of the account with an HDHP. Also, both serve as retirement accounts which could be drawn from without penalty at age 65 and older.” [Investopedia, 8/28/19]

### Incapacitation

| 2005: Fischbach Introduced Legislation Requiring Incapacitated Individuals To Continue Receiving Food And Water Unless They Had Created A Living Will |

2005: Fischbach Introduced Legislation Requiring Incapacitated Individuals To Continue Receiving Food And Water Unless They Had Created A Living Will. “A bill that would require an incapacitated person to continue receiving food and water unless they have created a living will made its debut Thursday at the Legislature. Parents, spouses, doctors and others would no longer be able to decide when to remove a patient’s feeding tube in most cases, if SF2008, submitted by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, becomes law. A desire to see that the case of Florida resident Terri Schiavo would not repeat itself in Minnesota prompted the bill, Fischbach said. ‘This legislation assures that when there is no legal document specifying the person’s wishes, only a statement based on a fully formed decision can be interpreted as clear and convincing evidence of an intent to reject nutrition and hydration,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/1/05]

Fischbach’s Critics Said Families Should Be The Ones Making Decisions For Their Loved Ones In Difficult Situations Where Individuals Were Incapacitated. “Fischbach’s bill drew immediate criticism from Sen. John Hottinger, DFL-St. Peter, who called it exploitation for political ends. ‘In a circumstance such as this, the family should be the one making the heartbreaking decisions,’ he said. ‘It is not the place of government to dictate decisions reserved for families.’” [St. Cloud Times, 4/1/05]
Housing Issues

Significant Findings

✓ In 1999, Fischbach sponsored legislation exempting the Stearns County Housing and Redevelopment Authority from having to pay $680,000 that it owed to the state.

Housing

1999: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Exempting The Stearns County Housing And Redevelopment Authority From Paying $680,000 That It Owed To The State

1999: The Stearns County HRA Was Alleged To Have Misused $680,000

1999: The Minnesota Auditor’s Office Said Stearns County Misspent $680,000, And That It Had To Be Paid Back To The State. “Local legislators have filed a bill as expected that would forgive more than $680,000 that the state says the Stearns County Housing and Redevelopment Authority must pay. The bill says that all expenditures from four tax increment financing districts would be deemed to have been spent in compliance with the law. At issue is money that the state auditor’s office says was misspent or misappropriated by the county HRA as part of the operation of those TIF districts. County HRA officials say poor insight and faulty accounting procedures caused the problems, not actual expenditure violations, and that the expenditures could have been done legally had proper attention been paid and proper accounting procedures used.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/99]

Amidst An FBI Investigation, The Former HRA Chief Was Ousted Over The Misused Funds. “An 18-month state audit of the TIF districts that was requested by the county HRA revealed the questionable spending. It was the latest turn in the two-year St. Cloud and Stearns County HRA scandal that resulted in the ouster of Dean Otterson, who headed the city HRA and ran the county HRA on a consulting basis. The legislative relief would not affect the ongoing criminal investigation of Otterson’s behavior being conducted by the FBI. The bill would only relieve the county HRA from having to pay the money - money that ultimately would end up in the hands of the state because it would be given to the Rocori school district, which would then lose that much money in state aid. Such requests for relief from accounting and administrative errors are commonplace for TIF districts statewide. Several others have been introduced in the Legislature in this session alone. But most do not come in the wake of such a high-profile incident.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/99]

Fischbach Introduced Senate Legislation To Relieve The County Of The Money It Owed The State

Fischbach Introduced Senate Legislation To Relieve The County Of The Money It Owed The State. “Such requests for relief from accounting and administrative errors are commonplace for TIF districts statewide. Several others have been introduced in the Legislature in this session alone. But most do not come in the wake of such a high-profile incident. Rep. Doug Stang, R-Cold Spring is carrying the bill in the House, with co-authors Joe Opatz, DFL-St. Cloud; Steve Dehler, R-St. Joseph; and Jim Knoblach, R-St. Cloud. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud, will carry a similar bill in the Senate along with Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. Stang said that the bill should have little trouble going through the House Local Government Committee, which he sits on, but that it will ‘undergo some close scrutiny’ when it goes before the House Tax Committee. If the bill does not pass, the county is prepared to go to court, even though that could cost taxpayers thousands of dollars, too. County officials believe it makes no sense to raise the tax levy $680,000 to pay that money to the state because there were legitimate accounting and administrative errors.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/99]
Fischbach And Other Legislators Filed The Bill To Forgive Money Owed By The County, Claiming That All Expenditures Would Be Deemed To Have Been Spent In Compliance With The Law. “Local legislators have filed a bill as expected that would forgive more than $680,000 that the state says the Stearns County Housing and Redevelopment Authority must pay. The bill says that all expenditures from four tax increment financing districts would be deemed to have been spent in compliance with the law.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/99]
Infrastructure & Transportation Issues

**Significant Findings**

- In 1999, Fischbach proposed a flat car registration fee. Rural lawmakers worried that it would hurt the main revenue source for highway repairs.

- In 2003, Fischbach helped kill a bill that would have provided $148 million for capital improvement projects in the St. Cloud area.

- Fischbach consistently voted against bonding packages to fund infrastructure development in Minnesota. In 2004, she and her fellow Republicans killed a $949 million infrastructure package. In 2006, she voted against a largely uncontroversial bonding package to fund infrastructure. In 2007, she voted against a sweeping bonding package to fund a variety of infrastructure projects, arguing that it was “just too big.”

**Transportation Funding**

**2016: Fischbach Missed A Vote On A $1.5 Billion Bonding Bill, But Said She Would Have Voted Against The Bill If She Had Been Present**

2016: Fischbach Missed A Vote On A $1.5 Billion Bonding Bill, But Said She Would Have Voted Against The Bill If She Had Been Present. “The Minnesota Senate on Thursday fell one vote short of passing the DFL’s $1.5 billion bonding bill. The bill, HF 3467, sponsored by Sen. LeRoy Stumpf, DFL-Plummer, who chairs of the Senate Capital Investment Committee, needed a three-fifths majority of 41 votes, but only got 40. One Republican, Sen. Carla Nelson of Rochester, voted yes. The 26 other Republicans present voted no. (Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, had an excused absence but said later she would have voted no.)” [Finance & Commerce, 5/5/16]

**2012: Fischbach Nearly Derailed A Bonding Bill By Trying To Rule That Any Amendments To The Bill That Increased Funding Were Out Of Order**

2012: The Minnesota Senate Passed A $496 Million Bonding Bill

2012: The Minnesota Senate Passed A $496 Million Bonding Bill By A 45-22 Vote. “The fractious Minnesota Senate passed the bill 45-22 in an awkward session that saw more than half the Republican majority caucus vote against it. The bill garnered the votes of 27 DFL senators, but only 18 of the 37 members of the GOP majority. The discipline needed to pass the bill in the same form it passed earlier in the day in the House failed to materialize as the bill was subjected a barrage of amendments, a couple of which were adopted. The $496 million bill, sponsored by Sen. Dave Senjem, R-Rochester, will need to be conferred if the House doesn’t agree to the changes.” [Finance & Commerce, 5/8/12]

…But, Fischbach Nearly Derailed The Bill By Trying To Rule That Any Amendments To The Bill That Increased Funding Were Out Of Order, But She Was Then Overruled

Fischbach Nearly Derailed The Bill By Trying To Rule That Any Amendments To The Bill That Increased Funding Were Out Of Order, But She Was Then Overruled. “A procedural hubbub arose when Senate President Michelle Fischbach interpreted Senate rules to mean that amendments that increased the funding in the bill were out of order. Sen. Sandy Pappas, DFL-St. Paul, appealed Fischbach’s ruling on her amendment to increase bonding money for higher education, and Fischbach was then overruled with votes from all DFLers and her fellow

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<th>2010: The Minnesota Senate Passed A $1 Billion Bonding Bill That Included Funding For Educational Facilities And Commuter Rail Expansion, And Created 270 Permanent Jobs</th>
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| 2010: The Minnesota Senate Voted 52-14 To Pass A $1 Billion Bonding Bill That Funded Educational Facilities And Renovations, And Extended Commuter Rail Service To St. Cloud. “A state bonding bill stuffed with local goodies, including $15 million to expand St. Cloud Civic Center, continued its speedy progress Tuesday by sailing through the Minnesota Senate. Senators voted 52-14 to advance a $1 billion bonding bill that includes more than $80 million for Central Minnesota. It includes money to build a science lab at St. Cloud State University, renovate a building at St. Cloud Technical and Community College, extend commuter rail service to St. Cloud and expand a civilian training center at Camp Ripley.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/10/10] |

| The Bill Was Projected To Create 270 Permanent Jobs And 379,000 Hours Of Construction Labor. “Boosters of the St. Cloud Civic Center expansion, including Mayor Dave Kleis, have said it would create 270 permanent jobs in St. Cloud plus 379,000 hours of construction labor. Those jobs could boost Minnesota’s economy as early as this spring if lawmakers pass the bonding bill quickly, said Sen. Tarryl Clark, DFL-St. Cloud. ‘The timing really is about creating these jobs,’ Clark said.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/10/10] |

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| Fischbach Opposed The Bonding Bill Because It Was “Just Too Big” And Questioned How Minnesota Would Borrow More Money In The Midst Of A Deficit. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, said the bonding bill contained some worthy projects, but she opposed it as being ‘just too big.’ ‘We’re in a deficit right now,’ Fischbach said. ‘How are we to be borrowing more money?’” [St. Cloud Times, 2/10/10] |

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| Fischbach Said That If Officials Could Secure An Additional $2 Million For The Sauks Rapid Bridge, They “Would Not Have TO Talk About The Sauks Rapids Bridge Ever Again.” “The funding gap is the result of the rising cost of steel, realignment of the bridge footings and other factors that were beyond anyone’s control, said Fischbach, who serves on the committee. ‘We just need a little bit more to complete this project,’ she told fellow committee members. ‘If we could get this, you would not have to talk about the Sauk Rapids bridge ever again.’” [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/07] |

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<th>2007: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Reimburse Stearns County For Constructions Costs Of The Sauk Rapids Bridge, But Later Reduced The Amount Requested After It Was Revealed Taxpayers Might Have To Foot The Bill For State Aid That Didn’t Come Through</th>
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2007: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Reimburse Stearns County Up To $10.5 Million For A State Loan To Cover The Funding Gap For The Construction Of The Sauk Rapids Bridge, And Said The Amount Needed Would Be Mitigated By Federal And Municipal Money

Fischbach Claimed That Money Loaned From Municipal And Federal Revenue Would Mitigate The Amount Of Money Needed From The State. “Sauk Rapids is not on the hook for any of the remainder and already has secured and disbursed $8 million in state funds for downtown impact mitigation to help businesses and property owners affected by the bridge, said Ross Olson, Sauk Rapids city administrator. The city is also putting $1.4 million in local sales tax dollars toward the bridge cost, along with $2.5 million in local sales tax dollars from St. Cloud, he said. An additional $2 million being sought by Minnesota congressional representatives would reduce the amount needed from the state, Fischbach said. ‘We’re going to pursue whatever path or combination of paths gets us the best results to get this final amount taken care of,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/8/07]

2006: Fischbach Was One Of The Only State Senators To Vote Against A Largely Uncontroversial Bonding Bill To Fund Infrastructure Projects Across Minnesota

Projects That Were Funded Included Higher Education Buildings, The St. Cloud Airport, And The Northstar Commuter Rail Line. “The Senate bill is a victory for local higher education, which would get all
the state funding it needs to renovate St. Cloud State’s Wick Science Hall and Riverview Hall and for St. Cloud Technical College’s purchase of the nearby HealthPartners building to add to its campus. […] About one-third of the bill was designated to take care of higher education, said Sen. Keith Langseth, DFL-Glyndon, who heads the Senate Capital Investment Committee. […] St. Cloud got the first of three $2 million airport expansion requests included in the bill. ‘The top concern for us is the airport,’ Mayor Dave Kleis said. ‘We need to pick up that $2 million to start buying the land.’ Also included is $60 million to fulfill the state’s commitment to the capital costs of the proposed Northstar commuter rail line from Minneapolis to Big Lake. Getting money included for the proposed Mississippi Woodland Regional Trail along the Mississippi River near Becker in Sherburne County was a victory, said Sen. Betsy Wergin, R-Princeton. The Little Falls Zoo and a warming house along the Soo Line Trail in Bowlus made the cut. Both projects fall within the district of Sen. Paul Koering, R-Fort Ripley, who serves on the bonding committee.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/24/06]

Fischbach Was One Of Only Nine Senators To Vote Against The Bill, Arguing That It Was Insufficient Because It Did Not Include Funding For Richmond’s Sewer Treatment Plant

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill, Saying She Was “Disappointed” That It Did Not Include Funding For The Richmond Sewer Treatment Plant. “Langseth introduced the bill Tuesday and got Senate DFLers to suspend the rules and get a floor vote Thursday, without hearing any committee testimony on it. That rankled Rep. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who voted against the bill after trying unsuccessfully to get money for Richmond’s sewer treatment earmarked in the bill. ‘I’m disappointed to see that our priorities are not on things like sewer treatment plants. They’re not the most glamorous things in the world, but they’re important,’ she said. ‘I’m also disappointed there wasn’t a whole lot of public input.’” [St. Cloud Times, 3/24/06]

The Bill Passed Overwhelmingly, By A 56-9 Vote. “Senators voted 56-9 to approve the $990 million bonding bill, which is about $150 million more than Gov. Tim Pawlenty’s bonding request and the most recommended under state financial guidelines.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/24/06]

2006: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation Asking For $5 Million In Bonding Money To Go Towards Improving The Sauk Rapids Bridge

2006: Sauk Rapids And Stearns County Sough State Aid To Help Improve Roads Along The Sauk Rapids Bridge

2006: Sauk Rapids And Stearns County Sought State Funding To Help Pay For Road Improvements Along The Sauk Rapids Bridge, A Project Projected To Cost $57 Million. “Sauk Rapids and Stearns County will again look to the state to plug some of the remaining holes in funding for construction of the Sauk Rapids bridge. A bill introduced Monday at the Legislature asks for $5 million in state bonding money to pay for road improvements related to the bridge construction. The bridge construction and related improvements face a deficit of $7-10 million on the almost $57 million project due to higher-than-expected costs and engineering difficulties. Stearns County would have to make up the difference if extra federal or state dollars can’t be found because county officials agreed to pay any overruns, said Rep. Dan Severson, R-Sauk Rapids.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/14/06]

Fischbach Sponsored Legislation In The State Senate To Authorize $5 Million In Bonding To Help Pay For Bridge Improvements

Fischbach Sponsored Legislation In The State Senate To Authorize $5 Million In Bonding To Help Pay For Bridge Improvements, Even Though The County Deficit For The Project Was Projected To Be $10 Million. “‘It would take too big a bite out of the bonding bill to request the whole $10 million,’ Severson said. ‘We’re looking to the federal government to help out as well.’ Severson is the chief author of HF 3352, which is expected to soon have a Senate counterpart from Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. Bonding money would help pay for the reconstruction of Benton Drive, Stearns County Road 1, Ninth Avenue and Sixth Avenue near the new
bridge landing, as well as a new Benton Drive/Second Street intersection, said Ross Olson, Sauk Rapids city administrator.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/14/06]

**2005: Fischbach Voted Against A Bill To Fund Infrastructure Projects By Raising Minnesota’s Gas Tax**

**2005: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Bill To Raise The Gas Tax To Fund Infrastructure Projects, But Gov. Pawlenty Indicated He Would Veto The Bill**

The Minnesota Senate Passed A Bill To Raise The Gas Tax From 20 To 30 Cents, Which Would Generate $320 Million In Infrastructure Spending Over The Next Year. “A proposed dime-a-gallon gas tax increase to pay for roads, bridges and transit is on its way to Gov. Tim Pawlenty’s desk after its approval Wednesday in the Senate. The 36-31 party-line decision to approve a transportation budget bill the House of Representatives voted for last week would raise the state’s 20-cent gas tax by an additional 10 cents. The increase would come in two stages, beginning with a nickel increase in July. The bill would spend about $7.5 billion on transportation in the next decade, with $320 million a year coming from the gas tax increase. Supporters said raising the gas tax for the first time since 1988 is necessary to help reduce congestion on metro roads and increase safety on rural highways.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/19/05]

Gov. Pawlenty Signaled That He Would Veto The Bill. “Opponents said Pawlenty was sure to veto the bill and the Legislature would be left with little time to put together a less drastic transportation bill before the session’s end Monday. The bill includes an increase on the fee for license tabs on higher-value new vehicles, a wheelegage tax allowing counties to charge up to $20 on each motor vehicle weighing more than 26,000 pounds and a dedication of part of the state sales tax paid in the metro area to metro transit. That constitutes a ‘huge tax increase’ on those least able to pay it, said Sen. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/19/05]

**Fischbach Voted Against The Bill**

**Fischbach Voted Against The Bill.** “How they voted The Minnesota Senate voted 36-31 on Wednesday to approve HF2461, a $7.8 billion transportation budget bill that includes a dime-a-gallon gas tax increase. A ‘yes’ vote was a vote to approve the bill. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: no.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/19/05]

**2004: Fischbach And Her Fellow Senate Republicans Killed A $949 Million Infrastructure Package**

**2004: Senate Republicans Killed A $949 Million Bonding Bill That Would Have Funded Minnesota Infrastructure Projects, Arguing That It Was Unaffordable**

**2004: Senate Republicans Killed A $949 Million Bonding Bill That Would Have Funded Minnesota Infrastructure Projects; It Needed 41 Voted, But Failed 39-28.** “Senate Republicans on Thursday killed a state borrowing bill that would have paid for $949 million worth of building projects, including several in St. Cloud. The bonding bill, which needed a supermajority of 41 votes to pass, failed 39-28. Only three Republicans and the Senate’s lone independent joined DFLers in voting for it. The rest called it too big and expensive. The defeat throws another wrench into the Legislature’s contentious struggle to reach an end to the session. It has some observers wondering if any bonding package will be approved this year. Lawmakers are constitutionally required to adjourn by May 17, although the governor could call a special session.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/04]

Republicans Argued That The Bill Was Unaffordable And Said Minnesota Needed To Tackle Its Debt. “‘It’s unaffordable,’ said Sen. Betsy Wergin, R-Princeton. ‘I’d rather not have (a bonding bill) than have one we can’t afford.’ The Legislature first should reach a compromise on how to solve the state’s $160 million budget deficit, said Senate Minority Leader Dick Day, R-Owatonna. ‘You shouldn’t eat your dessert before you eat the vegetables,’ he said. ‘When you solve the budget problem, then you can come back and do some of these things.’” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/04]
The Bill Would Have Funded Key Building And Transportation Projects In Minnesota

The Bill Included Nearly $15 Million For Educational Facilities, And $42 Million For Bridges And Commuter Rail Lines. “The Senate bill included: $13.86 million to add classrooms, labs and a work-force center at St. Cloud Technical College. $2.9 million to renovate Centennial Hall at St. Cloud State University. $900,000 for improvements to St. Cloud State’s Brown Hall and the Mathematics and Science Center. $500,000 for predesign of the St. Cloud Civic Center expansion. $2 million for the Northstar commuter rail line between Big Lake and Minneapolis. $40 million for local bridges, including a new Sauk Rapids bridge. The Senate bill was significantly larger than the one passed by the House of Representatives, which would pay for $678 million worth of projects. Senate Republicans called it irresponsible spending.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/04]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill


2003: Fischbach Voted Against A Bonding Bill That Provided $237 Million In Infrastructure Improvements, And Passed Overwhelmingly In Both Chambers Of The Legislature

2003: A Bonding Bill That Provided $237 Million In Infrastructure Funding Passed The Minnesota House By A 100-27 Vote, And The Senate By A 49-13 Vote. “The financial stars finally have aligned for Little Falls residents hoping to fix up a tumbledown paper factory on the Mississippi River. They are among the winners in a bonding bill that passed the House 100-27 and the Senate 49-13 on Thursday and was expected to pass the Senate late Thursday night. The state will borrow money to complete $237 million worth of building and infrastructure improvements. Included is $1 million for cleanup of the Hennepin Paper site. The project was in last year’s bonding bill as well, but was among several vetoed by then-Gov. Jesse Ventura. This year, Gov. Tim Pawlenty is expected to sign the bill, which was part of an overall budget agreement with legislative leaders.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/20/03]


2003: Fischbach Helped Kill A Bill That Would Have Provided $418 Million For Capital Improvement Projects In The St. Cloud Area

2003: Central Minnesota Senators Came Together To Defeat A Bill That Would Have Provided $418 Million For Capital Improvements In The St. Cloud Area, Including Infrastructure And Flood Relief. “Several Central Minnesota senators helped defeat a bonding bill Thursday that would have provided money for St. Cloud-area projects. The bill would have had the state borrow almost $418 million for capital improvements, from road repairs to helping Roseau flood victims. A two-thirds majority is required to pass a bonding bill. It failed on a 35-31 vote. The Legislature traditionally passes a large bonding bill in even-numbered years, but often approves a smaller bill in others. Supporters said low interest rates and a sluggish economy make it a perfect time for capital projects. ‘Those are the times we get the most for our money,’ said the bill’s author, Sen. Keith Langseth, DFL-Glyndon. ‘Those are the times we put people to work who normally wouldn’t be working.’ The bill isn’t a cure-all for the state’s economy, but investing in infrastructure is ‘one small thing we can do today’ to help, said Sen. Dean Johnson, DFL-Willmar, whose district includes western Stearns County. Critics said the bill is too big and expensive.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/25/03]
Even Though It Would Have Benefited Her Own Constituents, Fischbach Voted Against The Bill, Claiming That It Was Too Expensive. “Republican Sens. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, Betsy Wergin of Princeton and Paul Koering of Fort Ripley voted against the bill. Kleis tried to amend the bill by taking out a number of projects but leaving money for Northstar, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the St. Cloud Civic Center and others. The amendment did not pass. Kleis said he supports a bonding bill but thought Langseth’s contained projects that aren’t immediately needed, such as the New Brighton Caboose and History Center. ‘I don’t think that anyone rational would say that’s an emergency in a nonbonding year,’ he said. Fischbach said it was difficult to vote against a bill that would benefit Central Minnesota projects, but the bill was too large. ‘That’s very tough,’ she said. ‘But you kind of weigh it and say, what is the better … policy?’ ‘Yes, there were good things in there, but it was too much,’ Wergin said. ‘It really would have been irresponsible spending.’” [St. Cloud Times, 4/25/03]

2001: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Rename An Overpass Along Minnesota Highway 55


2001: Fischbach Sponsored A Bill To Rename An Overpass Between Kimball And Watkins Along Minnesota Highway 55, “Old St. Anne’s Pass.” “An overpass between Kimball and Watkins along Minnesota Highway 55 will be named Old St. Anne’s Pass. A bill that had been introduced into the Minnesota Legislature and passed by both the House and Senate was signed Friday by Gov. Jesse Ventura, making the change official. The bill was sponsored by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Rep. Doug Stang, R-Cold Spring. For the most part, the name change will be a matter for the books.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/7/01]

The Name Change Was Prompted By A Local Resident, Who Was Going To Personally Pay For New Signs For The Overpass

The Name Change Was Prompted By A Local Resident, Who Was Going To Personally Pay For New Signs For The Overpass. “The name change is being done to reflect the history of that particular area and was prompted by St. Cloud resident Dan Becker. Becker will pay for the necessary signs to be posted near the overpass to reflect the new name. It’s unknown how soon that will happen following the governor’s signature on the bill. The overpass about to be renamed sits on land near the old St. Anne’s church and the church’s cemetery. In the late 1870s, about 45 families would travel through that land to attend mass at St. Anne’s. In 1894, the church and several other houses were destroyed by a tornado.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/7/01]

2001: Fischbach Cosponsored Legislation Authorizing About $1 Million In Funding To Develop Transportation Plans In Central Minnesota

2001: Minnesota Legislators Introduced A Bill To Grant The Central Minnesota Joint Planning Board About $1 Million To Conduct Corridor And Environmental Studies For Future Transportation Projects. “The Area Planning Organization and the Central Minnesota Joint Planning Board could receive almost $1 million to pay for development of specific transportation plans for the region. […] Some of the funds would help the area planning agency and the joint planning district identify and fund corridor and environmental studies in the St. Cloud-metro area, said Bill Hanson, executive director of the Area Planning Organization. The big issue planners want to address, he said, is the conceptual layout of the area’s circumferential, or beltway, system. The study also would consider whether a grid system might work better, he said. It is hoped that some money could be used to identify needed road and bridge alignments and to purchase some of the right of way necessary. The $1 million, which at this stage is an estimate, would permit the district and Area Planning Organization to work on two or three corridor studies. Each study could take a year or two to winnow down to one primary plan. An environmental study can take a few more years, he said.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/18/01]
Fischbach Cosponsored The Legislation. “Chief author of the House bill is Rep. Joe Opatz, DFL-St. Cloud. Other authors include Reps. Steve Dehler, R-St. Joseph; Leslie Schumacher, DFL-Sanitago; and Jim Knoblach, R-St. Cloud. In the Senate, the chief author is Sen. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud. Other authors include Sens. Dean Johnson, DFL-Willmar; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Dan Stevens, R-Mora; and Mark Ourada, R-Buffalo.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/18/01]

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<th>Fischbach Proposed A Flat Car Registration Fee; Rural Legislators Worried That It Would Hurt The Main Revenue Source For Highway Repairs</th>
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Fischbach Proposed A Flat Car Registration Fee. “A Senate panel Wednesday will take up the debate, looking at five different bills that propose varying methods for reducing the annual vehicle registration fee. Three more bills have been filed in the House, and two more are in the works. The highest-profile proposal comes from Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, that would create a flat $35 fee for passenger vehicles.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/16/99]

Rural Legislators Were Concerned Because Car Registration Fees Were The Chief Source Of Income For State Highway Repair. “Sen. Carol Flynn, DFL-Minneapolis, the chair of the transportation committee, said rural legislators are concerned because the registration fee or ‘car tax,’ as it is commonly called, is the chief source of revenue for repairing the state’s highways. The money is dedicated to highway repair along with the state’s 5-cent-a-gallon gasoline tax. Initially, the gas tax generated more money, but nowadays the car tax is, Flynn said.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/16/99]

Although Fischbach’s Proposed Flat Fee Was Not Adopted, She Supported $140 Million In Cuts To Auto Registration Fees, Which Undermined Funding For The Northstar Corridor

Due To $140 Million In Auto Registration Fee Cuts That Fischbach Supported, Minnesota’s Northstar Corridor Lost Its Main Source Of Funding. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, was gratified to see a $140 million reduction in the state’s auto registration fees in the Senate bill. While not the $35 flat tax she proposed, it represents a significant improvement from last year when her bill was slaughtered in committee and no reduction was even considered. This provision is dependent on passing a statewide referendum in 2000 that would dedicate money from the state’s vehicle excise tax fund to make up for the money lost by the reduction. And Fischbach pointed out that while there may not be much in immediate funding for the Northstar Corridor, if the referendum passes, it would trigger creation of a new transit fund receiving about $24 million annually, that would provide transit grants. Starting in 2002, that would be a potential source of money for the corridor.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/18/99]

The Northstar Corridor Only Secured $10,000 In State Funding From 2000 – 2001, Even Though It Needed $10 Million In State Funding In Order To Receive Federal Aid. “The biggest local transportation project, the Northstar Corridor, remains essentially unfunded in years 2000-2001. It will be up to Commissioner of Transportation Elwyn Tinklenberg to find money in existing funds to help the corridor raise $10 million needed to get $24 million in federal money. The only immediate money dedicated to the corridor in either budget bill is the Senate dedicating $10,000 of a requested $100,000 to study extension of the corridor to Little Falls. It also directs the Northstar Corridor authority to use some of the $1.5 million grant for this year to help complete the extension study.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/18/99]

2000: Fischbach Secured Licensing Fee Cuts As Part Of A Larger Budget Deal

2000: As Part Of A Larger Budget Deal, Fischbach Secured Licensing Fee Cuts That Were Projected To Cut The Average Licensing Tab By $42. “The average Minnesota family is expected to save about $70 a year, thanks
to an across-the-board income tax cut included in the state tax bill approved unanimously Monday night by a legislative committee. The tax bill, to be debated and voted on today in both the House and Senate, includes an estimated $350 million in permanent tax cuts and about $640 million for a tax rebate. Legislators were hustling to finish work on five major tax and spending bills so they could vote on them today. Only two were completed late Monday. Today’s deadline would allow legislators time to override vetoes by May 22, the last day the Legislature can meet without an extension from the governor. In addition to $175 million in income tax cuts, families will benefit from a $175 million cut in license tabs fees, chosen by Gov. Jesse Ventura when he was given control over one-third of all permanent tax cuts or new spending. The average tab fee is expected to drop from $138 to $96. Tab fee cuts were first proposed three years ago by Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/9/00]

### I-35W Bridge

#### 2010: Fischbach Threatened To Strip One Of Her Colleagues’ Committee Posts, Simply Because He Cooperated With DFLers On Investigating The I-35W Bridge Collapse

#### 2008: Jungbauer Cooperated With DFLers To Investigate The I-35W Bridge Collapse, Which Killed Thirteen People, But Republicans Warned Him That The Investigation Would Be A “Political Witch Hunt”

2008: Jungbauer Worked With DFLers On A Joint Committee To Investigate The I-35W Bridge Collapse, Which Killed Thirteen, But Republicans Warned Him That It Was “Political Witch Hunt” Against Gov. Pawlenty. “The ranking Republican on Senate transportation issues said party leaders may prevent him from chairing a key committee because he cooperated with DFLers on a probe of the Interstate 35W bridge collapse. Sen. Michael Jungbauer, R-East Bethel, said that leading Republicans warned him two years ago the investigation would amount to a ‘political witch hunt’ aimed at discrediting Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty, and said the episode is now hurting him politically. […] The investigation by the joint legislative committee concluded in May 2008 that the bridge collapse, which killed 13 and created worldwide headlines, came after state transportation officials struggled with a lack of money for repairs, wrestled with a confusing chain of command and missed chances to detect potentially fatal problems.” [Star Tribune, 11/10/10]

#### Jungbauer Said That His Fellow Republicans, Including Fischbach, Threatened To Revoke His Ranking Membership On The Senate Transportation Committee Due To His Work On The Investigation

Jungbauer Said That His Fellow Republicans, Including Fischbach, Threatened To Revoke His Ranking Membership On The Senate Transportation Committee Due To His Work On The Investigation. “‘We got into a big fight,’ said Jungbauer, a two-term state senator. ‘They threatened that if I sat on that committee they’d pull my status of [being] the ranking minority member on the Transportation [Committee] at that point.’ Jungbauer said that new Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch, new Senate President Michelle Fischbach and Sen. David Hann, R-Eden Prairie, and a former Republican gubernatorial candidate, were among those urging him not to serve on the joint panel.” [Star Tribune, 11/10/10]

#### … But, Fischbach Also Served On The Same Joint Legislative Committee That Investigated The I-35W Bridge Collapse

2007: Fischbach Was One Of Sixteen Lawmakers Appointed To A Joint Legislative Committee To Investigate The Collapse Of The I-35W Bridge. “Three St. Cloud-area state lawmakers will serve on a joint legislative committee investigating the collapse of the Interstate Highway 35W bridge in Minneapolis. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Sen. Amy Koch, R-Buffalo; and Rep. Dan Severson, R-Sauk Rapids; are among 16 lawmakers picked to take a look at the policies and practices of the Minnesota Department of Transportation and its decisions in response to bridge inspection reports. All three serve on transportation finance committees in the Legislature.” [St. Cloud Times, 8/15/07]
The bridge had been declared structurally deficient since 1990, and Fischbach said the legislature needed to scrutinize how the state’s transportation budget was being spent. “No announcement has come yet on when the group will begin meeting or how long it will take to conclude its business. ‘There’s a lot of money going into what’s called transportation. Where are we spending it?’ Fischbach said. Topics for review will include MnDOT’s response to the bridge collapse and whether the agency has adequate staffing. The panel also will look at a 1997 review of Minnesota’s highway spending from the Office of the Legislative Auditor, House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher said.” [St. Cloud Times, 8/15/07]
Judiciary Issues

Significant Findings

✓ In 2007, Fischbach introduced legislation to weaken judges’ independence by allowing legislators to serve on Minnesota’s Board on Judicial Standards.

Judiciary


Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Change Protocol For The Board On Judicial Standards By Allowing Legislators To Serve On It, And Allowing The Board To Directly Remove Judges From Office. “Under a bill introduced by Severson and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, the standards board’s current composition of four judges, two lawyers and four nonlawyers appointed by the governor would change to eight citizen applicants chosen at random who would then appoint two legislators. The new board could remove judges from office directly. Under existing law, only the state Supreme Court can do that. The bill has not been heard in either chamber and is not expected to be until next year at the earliest, Severson said. And he said it remains a work in progress that is ‘by no means the answer—all’ so far.” [Star Tribune, 4/12/07]

Republicans Claimed “Judicial Tyranny” Was Eroding Citizens’ Rights, And Argued That Legislators Should Have More Control Of Minnesota’s Board On Judicial Standards. “Oversight and discipline of Minnesota’s judiciary should be taken from judges and lawyers and given to a reconstituted Board on Judicial Standards dominated by citizen volunteers, a legislator and several critics of the state’s bench and bar said Wednesday. ‘Judicial tyranny is eroding the rights of the citizens,’ said Rep. Dan Severson, R-Sauk Rapids. ‘We need to give the power back to the Legislature and the people.’” [Star Tribune, 4/12/07]

The Board On Judicial Standards Was A Body Established To Oversee Judges’ Conduct On The Bench. “The Board on Judicial Standards, established in 1971, oversees judges’ conduct on and off the bench, leaving disputes over their rulings to the appellate courts. But a state Capitol news conference convened by Severson featured expressions of outrage over some judges’ decisions on matters of property rights, child support and child custody.” [Star Tribune, 4/12/07]
Labor & Working Families

**Significant Findings**

✓ Fischbach consistently voted against minimum wage increases in Minnesota. In 2004, 2005, and 2013, she voted against raising the minimum wage.

✓ In 2015, Fischbach opposed allowing child care providers to unionize.

**Minimum Wage**

**2013: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Minnesota’s Minimum Wage To $7.75 Per Hour**

2013: The Senate Passed A Bill To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 Per Hour To $7.75 Per Hour By August 2015. “Competing minimum wage bills are splitting Minnesota Democrats on an issue they consider a priority this legislative session. The Minnesota Senate on Wednesday approved a bill to bring the wage floor up to $7.75 per hour by August 2015. That’s a step up from the $6.15 in place now, a rate that is below the federal standard.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/9/13]

**Fischbach Voted Against The Bill.** “The bill passed on a 39-28 party-line vote. All St. Cloud-area senators - Sens. Dave Brown, R-Becker; Paul Gazelka, R-Nisswa; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; John Pederson, R-St. Cloud; and Torrey Westrom, R-Elbow Lake - voted against the measure.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/9/13]

**2005: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 To $6.15 An Hour**

2005: The Senate Overwhelmingly Passed A Bill To Raise The State’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 To $6.15 An Hour, And Gov. Pawlenty Indicated He Would Sign The Bill Into Law. “Minimum-wage earners can expect a raise this summer. Senate members on Tuesday quickly agreed with a House of Representatives vote the day before to bump the state’s bottom wage up $1 an hour. The 42-22 vote sends Minnesota's first minimum-wage increase since 1997 to the desk of Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who has indicated he will sign it. Senate members agreed to increase the minimum wage for most workers from $5.15 to $6.15 an hour.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/4/05]

**Fischbach Still Voted Against The Bill, Even Though The Bill Passed 41-22 And Eight Republicans Voted For It.** “It was a reasonable increase,” said Sen. Paul Koering, R-Ft. Ripley, one of eight Republicans who joined DFLers to support the increase. ‘It’s not out of line to have an increase once in a while.’ […] Voting no: Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/4/05]

**2005: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Minnesota’s Minimum Wage To $7 An Hour**

2005: The Senate Passed A Bill To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 To $6.10 An Hour, And Eventually To $7 An Hour. “Workers at the bottom of the pay scale could earn $15 more a day if an increase to the state’s minimum wage, approved Thursday by the Senate, becomes law. Thursday’s 37-28 vote to increase the hourly rate this July from $5.15 an hour to $6.10 and to $7 in 2006 is the second time in two years the Democrat-led Senate has approved such a raise.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/4/05]

**Fischbach Voted Against The Bill.** “The Senate voted 37-28 Thursday to increase the state’s minimum wage from $5.15 per hour to $7 per hour. A ‘yes’ vote was a vote to increase the minimum wage. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: No. Sen. Dave Kleis,” [St. Cloud Times, 2/4/05]

April 2004: The State Senate Voted To Raise Minnesota’s Minimum Wage From $5.15 An Hour, To $5.90 In July, And Then To $6.65 An Hour A Year Later. “The state Senate voted Tuesday to raise the minimum wage $1.50 an hour by July 2005. The bill would boost the minimum wage from $5.15 an hour to $5.90 an hour in July, then to $6.65 an hour a year later. The measure passed the Senate 36-30, but it isn’t expected to survive the legislative session because the Republican-controlled House has not considered it.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]

The Bill Allowed An Exemption For Small Businesses Making Under $500,000 Per Year. “The bill includes an exemption for small businesses earning less than $500,000 a year. Those businesses could pay employees 25 cents less than the minimum wage this year and another 25 cents less in 2005. It also allows a lower wage for workers younger than 20 during the first 90 days of their employment.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “How they voted […] No: Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/14/04]

Unions

2013: Fischbach Opposed Allowing Child Care Providers And Personal Care Assistants To Join Labor Unions

2013: The Senate Finance Committee Voted To Advance A Bill Allowing Child Care Providers And Personal Care Assistants To Join Labor Unions For A Floor Vote

2013: The Senate Finance Committee Voted To Advance A Bill Allowing Child Care Providers And Personal Care Assistants To Join Labor Unions For A Floor Vote. “Legislation that would allow child care providers and personal care assistants to join labor unions was sent to the Senate floor on a 12-10 vote Wednesday evening. The bill cleared the Senate Finance Committee without a recommendation of support, marking the third time the proposal has squeaked by in a committee vote without the explicit backing of the panels’ members. The vote came just two days after the bill, sponsored by Sen. Sandy Pappas, DFL-St. Paul, stalled in the finance committee on an 11-11 vote. Two Senate DFLers—Terri Bonoff of Minnetonka, and Barb Goodwin of Columbia Heights—joined all Republicans in voting against the controversial measure, which could affect upwards of 20,000 workers.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 5/8/13]

Fischbach Opposed The Bill, And Said That Voting To Advance The Bill For A Floor Vote Was The Equivalent Of Voting In Favor Of The Bill

Fischbach Opposed The Bill, And Said That Voting To Advance The Bill For A Floor Vote Was The Equivalent Of Voting In Favor Of The Bill. “But Republicans argued that a vote to move the bill to the floor—even without any recommendation—was no different than voting in favor of it. ‘Don’t fool yourself,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R- Paynesville. ‘This is just like voting yes.’ Both the House and Senate bills are now poised to be taken up for votes on the floor.” [St. Paul Legal Ledger Capitol Report, 5/8/13]
Immigration & Border Issues

**Significant Findings**

- In 2018, Fischbach and her running mate campaigned on more stringent immigration enforcement, including requiring Minnesota cities to cooperate with federal immigration agencies and officials.
- In 2015, Fischbach supported halted the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Minnesota.

Border Security & ICE

Fischbach Said Immigration Was A National Security Issue

Fischbach Said Immigration Was A National Security Issue. “But I think what you see there is...the common thread there is that that was legal immigration. And and I think that there’s a real strong concern about illegal immigration. And I think it’s it’s a national security...but it’s also the fact that that, like I said bad people are coming in and it’s a security issue with the illegal immigration. You know, Wilmer may have maybe a good example of legal immigration and how it worked.” [Beers with Blois, Michelle Fischbach Interview, 1/3/20]

Fischbach’s Running Mate Supported Minnesota Cooperating With Federal Immigration Enforcement Officials

Fischbach’s Running Mate Said He And Fischbach Would Support Having Minnesota Cooperate With Federal Immigration Enforcement Officials. “Pawlenty said the Democrats shrug at illegal immigration, while he and Fischbach would cooperate with federal officials in immigration enforcement and support legal immigration.” [St. Cloud Times, 8/11/18]

Refugees

2015: Fischbach Supported Halting The Resettlement Of Syrian Refugees In Minnesota

2015: Fischbach Signed Onto A Letter To Governor Mark Dayton, Urging Him To Halt The Acceptance Of Syrian Refugees In Minnesota. “Eighteen Republican members of the Minnesota Senate, including several from Central Minnesota, have sent a letter to Gov. Mark Dayton asking for a temporary halt in the acceptance of Syrian refugees. The letter, sent Tuesday, says Dayton should join the 31 governors who have sent letters to the president rejecting Syrian refugees ‘until we have indisputable assurances that there are no gaps in our screening process.’ Among those signing the letter were Sens. David Brown of Becker, Torrey Westrom of Elbow Lake, Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, Mary Kiffmeyer of Big Lake and Bruce Anderson of Buffalo. The letter states that the Islamic State terrorist group has promised to launch attacks on foreign soil and ‘Americans are worried about our ability to stop them.’” [St. Cloud Times, 11/27/15]

Fischbach’s Running Mate Called For A Pause In Refugee Resettlement In Minnesota

Fischbach’s Running Mate Called For A Pause In Refugee Resettlement In Minnesota. “Like Johnson, Pawlenty has called for a pause in the resettlement of refugees in Minnesota, he said. ‘Minnesota’s done more than it’s fair share in this regard.’” [St. Cloud Times, 8/11/18]
LGBT Issues

Significant Findings

✓ In 2011, Fischbach voted to allow a statewide ballot amendment to put a constitutional ban on gay marriage, and said she would vote for the amendment if it made it to the ballot.

✓ In 2004, Fischbach signed a pledge to support marriage being defined as between one man and one woman.

✓ In 1996, Fischbach did not believe Minnesota should recognize same-sex marriage.

Marriage Equality

2013: Fischbach Voted Against A Bill Allowing Same-Sex Couples To Get Married In Minnesota

2013: Fischbach Voted Against A Bill Allowing Same-Sex Couples To Get Married In Minnesota, Which Passed By A 37-30 Vote. “Minnesota is set to become the 12th U.S. state where same-sex couples can get married, after a Senate vote Monday that will let the weddings start Aug. 1. Gov. Mark Dayton has pledged to sign the bill and scheduled a ceremony at 5 p.m. today on the Capitol steps to do so. Thousands of gay marriage supporters thronging the Capitol erupted into deafening cheers after the Senate’s 37-30 vote; the House passed it last week on a 75-59 vote. […] All St. Cloud-area senators - Dave Brown, R-Becker; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Paul Gazelka, R-Nisswa; John Pederson, R-St. Cloud; and Torrey Westrom, R-Elbow Lake - voted against the bill.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/14/13]

2011: Fischbach Voted To Allow A Statewide Ballot Amendment To Put A Constitutional Ban On Gay Marriage, And Said She Would Vote For The Amendment If It Made It To The Ballot

2011: Fischbach Voted To Allow A Statewide Ballot Amendment To Put A Constitutional Ban On Gay Marriage. “The Minnesota Senate has approved a plan to put a constitutional ban on gay marriage to a statewide vote in 2012. After three-plus hours of debate Wednesday, senators voted 38-27 to pass the amendment, which would set a vote on whether to define marriage as between one man and one woman. […] Sen. Leroy Stumpf of Plummer was the only Democrat to vote yes on the amendment. All Senate Republicans voted yes, including all St. Cloud-area senators. That includes Sens. John Pederson, R-St. Cloud; Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville; Dave Brown, R-Becker; Paul Gazelka, R-Brainerd; Joe Gimse, R-Willmar; Bill Ingebritsen, R-Alexandria; Scott Newman, R-Hutchinson; and Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch, R-Buffalo” [St. Cloud Times, 5/12/11]

Fischbach Said She Would Personally Vote In Favor Of The Amendment If It Made It To The Ballot.
“Pederson and Fischbach told the Times they also plan to vote for the amendment if it goes on the ballot.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/12/11]

2004: Fischbach Signed A Pledge To Support Marriage Being Defined As Between One Man And One Woman

2004: Fischbach Joined Gov. Pawlenty In Signing A Pledge To Support Marriage Being Defined As Between One Man And One Woman, And Called On DFLers To Support An Amendment Banning Same-Sex Marriage In Minnesota. “Some Central Minnesota legislators joined Gov. Tim Pawlenty on Monday in signing a pledge to support the so-called Defense of Marriage Act. They called on DFL leaders to allow the full Senate to vote on the constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage. The House of Representatives passed the
measure in March, but a Senate committee defeated it. Since then, there have been unsuccessful attempts to bring the bill directly to the Senate floor. On the steps of the Capitol, Pawlenty and a group of lawmakers signed a pledge sponsored by the Minnesota Citizens in Defense of Marriage, a new organization pushing for the constitutional amendment. […] Among the legislators signing the pledge were Republican Sens. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville and Betsy Wergin of Princeton, and Reps. Bud Heidgerken of Freeport and Sondra Erickson of Princeton.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/4/04]

**Fischbach Did Not Believe Minnesota Should Recognize Same-Sex Marriage**

1996: **Fischbach Did Not Believe Minnesota Should Recognize Same-Sex Marriage.** According to Vote Smart’s Minnesota State Legislative Election 1996 National Political Awareness Test, Fischbach did not believe “that the Minnesota government should recognize same-sex marriages.” [Vote Smart, accessed 8/14/19]
**Science & Technology Issues**

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**Stem Cells**

**Fischbach Supported Banning Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfers, Which Critics Said Would Hamper Efforts To Cure Disease And Grow Biotech Jobs In Minnesota**

Fischbach Supported Banning Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfers, Which Were Used For Therapeutic And Reproductive Purposes. “Sen. Michelle Fischbach is leading an effort to ban a scientific procedure she and other critics liken to human cloning. Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Rep. Bob Dettmer, R-Forest Lake, have introduced matching bills to ban human applications of the procedure known as somatic cell nuclear transfer. The procedure creates an embryo by combining a cell nucleus with an egg cell that lacks one, according to the National Institutes of Health. It can be used for therapeutic purposes, such as to generate body tissue, or for reproductive purposes, such as to clone an organism.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/11/11]

St. Cloud Times: “Efforts To Cure Disease And Grow Biotech Jobs In Minnesota Would Be Hampered” By Fischbach’s Proposal. “Efforts to cure disease and grow biotech jobs in Minnesota would be hampered by a proposal to criminalize a procedure that could be used for stem-cell research, a University of Minnesota panel said Wednesday. State Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, offered the proposal, which would criminalize a procedure she and some others liken to human cloning.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/28/11]

St. Cloud Times: Critics Said Fischbach’s Proposal Would “Thwart Future Breakthroughs In The Field Of Regenerative Medicine.” “But such rhetoric is misleading, said the panel, which included researchers from the University of Minnesota and Mayo Clinic, and owners of Twin Cities biotech businesses. The proposal instead could thwart future breakthroughs in the field of regenerative medicine, panelists said. ‘We’re talking about curing diabetes. We’re talking about curing multiple sclerosis. We’re talking about untold possibilities,’ said Robert Rizza, executive dean for research from the Mayo Clinic.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/28/11]
State Issues

Significant Findings

✓ In 2001, Fischbach voted against providing $300 million in funding for the Minnesota Twins’ new stadium, and in 2006 voted against authorizing an agreement for the same stadium.

✓ In 2007, Fischbach sponsored legislation to provide Stearns County with $750,000 in state money to help buy land for a county park.

Minnesota Sports

2006: Fischbach Voted Against Funding A New Football Stadium For The University Of Minnesota

2006: The Senate Passed A Bill To Give The University Of Minnesota $173 Million For Its New Football Stadium, Generated From A Tax On Sports Memorabilia; However, The House Bill Generated The Money Primarily From Naming Rights

2006: The Senate Passed A Bill To Give The University Of Minnesota $173 Million For Its New Football Stadium, Generated From A Tax On Sports Memorabilia. “Money for a new University of Minnesota football stadium might be in hand this year if House and Senate leaders can decide how to pay for it. The Minnesota Senate voted 34-32 on Tuesday to approve a bill that gives $173 million from a proposed 13 percent tax on sports memorabilia to pay for a 50,000-seat open-air stadium on the Minneapolis campus. [St. Cloud Times, 5/10/06]

The House Of Representatives’ Companion Bill Generated The Money From Corporate Naming Rights, Hiking Student Activity Fees, And Buying 2,840 Acres Of Land From The University. “That’s a different source of funds than the one used in a Gophers stadium financing bill the House of Representatives approved last month. The money in that bill would come from corporate naming rights, student activity fee increases and buying 2,840 acres of Dakota County land from the University using $9.4 million a year in state tax revenue.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/10/06]

Fischbach Opposed The Senate Bill, Indicating That She Would Rather Have The Generated Money Come From Corporate Naming Rights

Fischbach Opposed The Senate Bill, Indicating That She Would Rather Have The Generated Money Come From Corporate Naming Rights. “Tuesday’s vote was close, with all 29 Republicans and three DFLers opposing the bill. Republican opponents said a tax increase was the wrong way to pay for the stadium. ‘I don’t understand why they’re not looking at naming rights,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, who voted against the bill. ‘That’s a lot of money, and what we’re doing is shifting it onto the taxpayers.’” [St. Cloud Times, 5/10/06]

2006: Fischbach Voted Against Authorizing An Agreement For The New Minnesota Twins Stadium

2006: Fischbach Was One Of Only Two Local Government Operations Committee Members To Vote Against Approving An Agreement To Finance The Minnesota Twins’ New Stadium. “The Minnesota Twins won their opener Monday night at the state Capitol, gaining victory for a ballpark plan from a very receptive Senate committee. The stadium project funded by Hennepin County and the Twins was approved by the State and Local Government Operations Committee and sent to the Taxes Committee, likely a much tougher Senate panel, where thorny issues of financing and referendums likely will be subjects of lengthy debate. Monday night’s discussion largely circumvented those matters as the bill passed easily on a voice vote, with only Sens. Scott Dibble, DFL-
Minneapolis, and Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, casting audible ‘no’ votes among 13 members present. Lawmakers’ votes are not officially recorded in such a voice vote.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 4/4/06]

The Agreement Authorized A 0.15 Percent County Sales Tax To Pay For Three-Quarters Of The Project, Which Was Estimated To Cost $478 Million. “Under the agreement between the Twins and the county, a 0.15 percent county sales tax — 3 cents on a $20 purchase — would pay for three-quarters of the project. The price tag for the stadium and infrastructure was $478 million last year, but inflation in building materials has raised the estimate by $30 million.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 4/4/06]

2001: Fischbach Voted Against Providing $300 Million In Funding For The Minnesota Twins’ New Stadium

2001: Fischbach Voted Against Providing $300 Million In Funding For The Minnesota Twins’ New Stadium, Including A $100 Million Loan At A Below-Market Interest Rate Of Three Percent. “House and Senate committees passed separate versions of a $300 million Twins stadium bill Tuesday, continuing the legislation’s grand tour on the way to possible floor votes. The Senate Taxes Committee approved its version on a 15-12 vote and sent the bill on to the Senate Finance Committee, where it is scheduled to be heard today. In the House, the Ways and Means Committee, by voice vote, approved its version of the bill and sent it to the Capital Investment Committee. Twins president Jerry Bell made it clear that he prefers the Senate bill. ‘It appears more workable,’ he said after the vote. The Senate Taxes Committee, though, tacked on a below-market interest rate of 3 percent on a $100 million state loan that is part of the proposal. As the bill was originally introduced, the loan would have been interest-free. In addition, the Metropolitan Council would provide $40 million in revenue bonds. […] Republicans voting no (8) Michele Bachmann, Stillwater; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville; Debbie Johnson, Ham Lake; Warren Limmer, Maple Grove; Gen Olson, Minnetrista; Mady Reiter, Shoreview; Kenric Scheevel, Preston; Grace Schwab, Albert Lea.” [Star Tribune, 5/16/01]

Public Lands

2007: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Provide Stearns County With $750,000 In State Money To Help Buy Land For A County Park

2007: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Provide Stearns County With $750,000 In State Money To Help Buy Land For A County Park. “The push is on again to convince lawmakers that Central Minnesota deserves state funding for parks as much as the Twin Cities does. Two bills introduced by Rep. Larry Hosch, DFL-St. Joseph, and Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, would give Stearns County $750,000 in state money to help purchase land for a county park on Kraemer Lake between St. Joseph and Cold Spring.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/30/07]

2003: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Allow Counties To Require Developers To Pay Park Fees

2003: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Allow Counties To Require Developers To Either Donate Land, Or Pay A Fee To Go Towards Park Or Trail Creation, For Every New Lot They Developed. “For years, some counties have been requiring developers to either donate land for parks and trails or pay a fee for every new residential lot they create. Now, counties want to make sure the law is on their side, but they are running into opposition from builders. County officials from Central Minnesota are among those lobbying for a bill that would give counties the same legal authority as cities and townships to charge a parkland dedication fee. The money could be used to buy land for new parks and trails or expand existing ones. ‘Counties have been practicing taking a fee for some time,’ said the bill’s author, Sen. Betsy Wergin, a former Sherburne County commissioner. Co-authors include Sens. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Sen. Dean Johnson, DFL-Willmar. The bill sets tight parameters, Wergin said, including requiring that the counties have a comprehensive parks and trails plan and that they spend the money in the same township where it was collected.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/19/03]
Seniors’ Issues

**Significant Findings**

- In the 2018 election, Fischbach supported eliminating the state tax on Social Security and benefits.
- In 2001, Fischbach cosponsored legislation to expand community care options for seniors and raise wages for nursing home caregivers.

**Social Security**

**2018: As A Candidate For Lt. Governor, Fischbach Campaigned On Repealing Minnesota’s Taxes On Social Security Benefits**

*2018: Fischbach And Her Running Mate Campaigned On Repealing Minnesota’s Taxes On Social Security Benefits.* “Pawlenty and Fischbach also highlighted their support for stringent immigration enforcement, medical care price transparency, and moving Minnesota away from Affordable Care Act-related provisions toward a more private health insurance market. Pawlenty emphasized his support for repealing the state’s taxes on Social Security benefits, as Minnesota is one of only a few states to do so.” [Free Press, 6/4/18]

**Senior Care**

**2001: Fischbach Cosponsored Legislation To Expand Community Care Options For Seniors And Raise Wages For Caregivers In Nursing Homes**

*2001: Fischbach Cosponsored Legislation To Promote More Community-Based Programs For Seniors In Minnesota Who Wanted To Continue Living In Their Own Homes.* “Legislation to reform and expand long-term care services for senior citizens will move forward in the Minnesota Legislature with broad bipartisan support. State Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) today introduced SeniorCare: Community Care Options for Older Adults in the Minnesota Senate. The bill was introduced earlier in the Minnesota House of Representatives by State Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester). Both Bradley and Hottinger are widely respected in the Legislature for their work on health care issues. SeniorCare would expand care and living choices for older adults in Minnesota. It would promote more community-based services, giving senior citizens more opportunity to live longer in their own homes. The legislation also creates new options in assisted living and nursing home care. […] Co-sponsors of SeniorCare include: Minnesota State Senate Sen. Linda Berglin (DFL-Minneapolis) Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville)” [Care Providers of Minnesota and Minnesota Health & Housing Alliance, Press Release, 2/1/01]

**The Legislation Also Provided Pay Increases For Caregivers In Nursing Homes.** “The legislation also would provide pay increases for caregivers. Nursing homes are seeing turnover rates of 60 percent or more among caregivers because of low pay—a crisis that some say would grow worse under the budget proposed by Governor Jesse Ventura.” [Care Providers of Minnesota and Minnesota Health & Housing Alliance, Press Release, 2/1/01]
**Tax Issues**

**Significant Findings**

- **✓** In 2013, Fischbach opposed Gov. Mark Dayton’s proposed tax overhaul that rewrote the state’s sales tax code and raised taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans.

- **✓** In 2006, Fischbach voted against a tax package that would have provided aid to school districts, given relief to farmers, and increased local aid, simply because it raised taxes on corporations.

- **✓** In 2004, Fischbach voted against a wide-ranging tax bill that included more local aid for outstate Minnesota cities, incentives for infrastructure development, and higher taxes on the wealthy. Fischbach said she was “very tempted” to support the bill due to its funding for outstate Minnesota, but nevertheless voted against the bill.

- **✓** In 2003, Fischbach voted against a tax package that raised taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans, while also balancing the state’s budget. She argued that it would be the “worst thing” for the economy.

- **✓** In 2001, Fischbach voted for a tax overhaul package that cut $840 million from the state’s revenues.

- **✓** In 1999, Fischbach introduced legislation trying to exempt clothing alterations from state sales taxes, which would have cost the state $1.3 million annually.

- **✓** In 1999, Fischbach voted against legislation exempting local governments from having to pay state sales taxes.

- **✓** In 1999, Fischbach voted against a $1.1 billion sales tax rebate package that primarily benefited middle and lower income Minnesotans.

**Corporate Taxes & State Tax Overhauls**

**2018: Fischbach Supported A Bill That Provided Tax Giveaways To Multinational Corporations And The Wealthiest Minnesotans While Not Providing Enough Money For Emergency School Aid**

**Fischbach Supported HF 4385, A Republican Tax Bill.** According to the Minnesota State Senate journal, Fischbach supported HF 4385. [Minnesota State Senate, Journal, 5/16/18]

**Gov. Dayton Vetoed HF 4385 Because It Would Have Protected Multinational Corporations.** “Joined by students and teachers at Bruce Vento Elementary School, Governor Mark Dayton today vetoed the Republican Tax Bill (H.F. 4385/S.F. 3982), making clear that he will not sign a Tax Bill until the Minnesota Legislature passes Emergency School Aid that would help schools avoid layoffs and program cuts. The Republican Tax Bill vetoed by Governor Dayton would have spent $136 million in the first year alone, and protected multinational corporations from paying nearly $200 million in state taxes on profits they have sheltered overseas. Corporate tax benefits and protections in the legislation would have unsustainably grown to more than $280 million in this biennium and $482 million in the next biennium.” [Office of Mark Dayton, Press Release, 5/17/18]

**Gov. Dayton Said The Bill Provided “Tax Giveaways To Multinational Corporations And The Wealthiest Minnesotans” While Not Providing Enough Money For Emergency School Aid.** “Meanwhile,
despite the State’s $329 million budget surplus, and hundreds of millions of dollars in tax giveaways to multinational corporations and the wealthiest Minnesotans, Republican Legislative Leaders have said there is not enough money to provide one-time Emergency School Aid for schoolchildren across Minnesota. In the final days of the 2018 Legislative Session, Governor Dayton is strongly urging Republican lawmakers to reconsider.” [Office of Mark Dayton, Press Release, 5/17/18]

**2006: Fischbach Opposed A Tax Plan That Would Have Provided Relief To School Districts, Given Aid To Farmers, And Provided Aid To Counties And Cities, Simply Because It Raised Taxes On Corporations**

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**2006: Senate DFLers Introduced A Tax Bill That Helped Farmers, Cities And Counties, And School Districts, Provided Property Tax Relief, And Provided Tax Credits For Farmers And Veterans**

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**2006: Senate DFLers Introduced A Tax Plan That Failed By A 32-35 Vote.** “Two Central Minnesota Senate Democrats helped defeat a bill from their own party Wednesday that would have raised taxes on businesses to pay for more aid to school districts, cities and counties. On a vote of 32-35, the Senate rejected SF 3131, a supplemental tax bill that proponents said would deliver property tax relief to homeowners but that opponents warned would harm the state’s economic recovery.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

The Bill Would Have Generated $160 Million In Revenue By Raising The State’s Deed Tax And Raising Taxes On Corporations That Operated Overseas. “The tax bill written by Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, would have raised $160 million next year by taxing foreign operating corporations and another $44 million by lifting a cap on commercial and industrial property tax rates. Pogemiller dropped a proposed income tax increase for the top earners in the state before Wednesday’s debate and a proposed deed tax increase during the discussion. Businesses have received more than their fair share of tax breaks since a 2001 tax policy shift, he said. ‘The facts are, homeowners’ property taxes have gone up 40 percent since 2001, while commercial and industrial property taxes have gone up 5.3 percent,’ he said. A loophole that allows corporations to avoid taxation by basing themselves overseas means ‘higher taxes for every other business in Minnesota and every other consumer, because that’s lost revenue,’ he said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

The Bill Would Have Relieved Property Tax Levies, While Simultaneously Giving School Districts An Extra $60 Million. “The increases would have given school districts an extra $60 million beginning in 2008 to replace local property tax levy dollars.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

The Bill Would Have Authorized A Total Of $138 Million In Aid To Cities And Counties To Offset Federal Cuts, And Provided $17 Million In Tax Credits For Farmers And Veterans. “It also would have meant an extra $60 million in one-time aid to counties to offset federal funding cuts, $78 million in one-time additional aid to cities and another $16 million in restored tax credit reimbursements to cities. Also contained in the bill were $17 million worth of tax credits for beginning farmers’ financial training, for dairy farmers’ equipment investments, for military combat service and other areas.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]

**Fischbach Opposed The Bill Because It Raised Taxes On Corporations**

**Fischbach Opposed The Bill, Complaining That It Raised Taxes On Corporations, Which She Alleged Would consequently Lead To Unemployment.** “An amendment from Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, that would have given the Rocori school district levy authority to lease its administrative offices got into the bill, though Fischbach voted against its final passage. ‘It increased taxes, particularly the (commercial and industrial) tax on businesses,’ she said. ‘We want to keep our people employed.’ Next stop Clark and Fischbach agreed that DFL leadership might attempt to pass a stripped-down version of the tax bill before the session ends.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/20/06]
2004: Fischbach Voted Against A Wide-Ranging Tax Bill That, Among Other Things, Gave More Aid For Cities In Outstate Minnesota, Raised Taxes On The Wealthy, Incentivized Infrastructure Development, And Gave Bonuses To Veterans

2004: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Wide-Ranging Tax Bill

The Minnesota Senate passed a tax bill Thursday that includes more state aid for cities in outstate Minnesota and will prolong the St. Cloud area’s local sales tax if voters approve. The wide-ranging bill also would give bonuses to veterans of the war on terrorism through an income-tax checkoff, a proposal pushed by Sen. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud. However, Kleis and Central Minnesota’s other Republican legislators voted against the bill, saying it raises taxes on businesses. The bill passed the DFL-controlled Senate 38-28.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

The Bill Included $60 Million In Aid For Cities In Outstate Minnesota, And Authorized St. Cloud To Extend Its Half-Cent Sales Tax

The bill puts an additional $60 million into local government aid to outstate cities to make up for $150 million in LGA cuts last year. That would mean more money next year for most Central Minnesota cities, including more than $1 million for St. Cloud, $623,000 for Sartell, $300,000 for Sauk Rapids and $174,700 for Waite Park. The bill would allow St. Cloud and surrounding cities to continue charging a half-cent sales tax beyond its 2005 expiration date. Proceeds would help pay for the expansion of the St. Cloud Civic Center, a new public library and other area projects. St. Cloud also could raise its tax on food and beverages from 1 percent to 2 percent and its lodging tax from 5 percent to 6 percent of gross receipts. All three measures would require voter approval.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

The Bill Incentivized Infrastructure Development In Minnesota

The bill also would: - Allow Waite Park to charge the half-cent sales tax through 2005 for projects voters approved last November, including several road improvements. […] Provides tax exemptions for the development of personal rapid transit, which involves computer-controlled vehicles that run on an elevated track.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

The Bill Raised Taxes On The Wealthiest Minnesotans

The bill raises Minnesota’s top income tax rate from 7.85 percent to 8 percent. “The bill also would: […] Increases the top income tax rate from 7.85 percent to 8 percent to pay for changes in the alternative minimum tax, which some legislators have complained is unfairly hitting the middle class.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

Supporters Of The Bill Argued That It Would Spur Job Creation In Minnesota

Supporters Of The Bill Argued That It Would Spur Job Creation In Minnesota. “The bill’s author, Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, argued that the bill will help hold down property taxes and encourage job growth. But Republicans argued that the tax increases will hurt businesses. ‘A vote for this bill is a vote against job creation in Minnesota,’ Kleis said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

Fischbach Said She Was “Very Tempted” To Support The Bill Due To Its Funding For Cities In Outstate Minnesota, But Still Voted Against The Bill
Michelle Fischbach said she was “very tempted” to support the bill due to its funding for cities in outstate Minnesota, but still voted against the bill. “The additional LGA made it ‘very tempting’ to vote for the bill,” said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. But she said too much of the money went to Minneapolis and St. Paul instead of outstate Minnesota where it’s needed more. Kleis’ amendment to create the voluntary veterans’ bonus checkoff passed handily on a 59-6 vote. The checkoff is modeled after an existing one that funds nongame wildlife habitat. […] Four area Republicans voted no on the Senate tax bill: Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Paul Koering of Fort Ripley and Betsy Wergin of Princeton.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

**Sales Tax**

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<th>2013: Gov. Dayton Proposed An Overhaul Of The Tax Code That Rewrote The State’s Sales-Tax Code And Raised Taxes In A Number Of Areas</th>
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expanding the number of goods and services subject to the tax. One example is clothing purchases, now exempt from Minnesota sales tax, which would be taxed under Dayton’s plan on items of $100 or more.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/22/13]

### 2007: Fischbach Supported Allowing A Ballot Amendment To Decide If Minnesota Should Raise Its Sales Tax To Boost Funding For Cultural And Environmental Funding

### 2007: Legislation Was Introduced To Allow A Ballot Amendment That Would Let Voters Decide Whether Or Not To Raise The State’s Sales Tax By 3/8th Of A Percentage Point

**2007: Legislation Was Introduced To Allow A Ballot Amendment That Would Let Voters Decide Whether Or Not To Raise The State’s Sales Tax By 3/8th Of A Percentage Point.** “Wearing buttons in support of the arts and the outdoors, Leslie Schumacher was smiling from ear to ear Thursday on the floor of the House of Representatives. The former state representative was there to lobby her former colleagues to support a bill asking voters to increase the state’s sales tax. The proceeds would be dedicated to environmental and cultural improvements. ‘This is a critical issue. Tourism is the No. 1 industry in Minnesota,’ the Central Minnesota Arts Board executive director said. ‘If we don’t see more of an investment in the state, we’re going to see the tourism industry fail.’ After 10 years of debating it, lawmakers decided Thursday to put the question to voters by overwhelmingly approving a constitutional amendment that would increase the sales tax by 3/8ths of a percentage point if a majority of the state’s voters approve it in November.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

**The Sales Tax Increase Would Have Gone Towards Environmental And Cultural Funding, Which Supporters Said Would Have Bolstered Minnesota’s Tourism Industry**

The Sales Tax Increase Was Projected To Generate $276 Million Per Year, Which Would Have Gone Towards Wildlife, Clean Water, And Cultural Heritage Funding. “The sales tax increase would take effect July 1, 2009. It is expected to raise an estimated $276 million a year until it expires 25 years later. One-third of the revenue would go to fish, game and wildlife habitat, while another third would go to clean water. Arts and cultural heritage projects would receive 19.75 percent of the revenue, with a statewide parks and trails fund receiving the remaining 14.25 percent of the pie.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

**Supporters Said This Funding Would Have Strengthened Minnesota's Tourism Industry, And That The Tourism Sector Was At Risk Of Failing Without More Investment.** “‘This is a critical issue. Tourism is the No. 1 industry in Minnesota,’ the Central Minnesota Arts Board executive director said. ‘If we don’t see more of an investment in the state, we’re going to see the tourism industry fail.’” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

### Fischbach Voted In Favor Of Allowing The Potential Sales Tax Increase To Appear On The Ballot As An Amendment

**Fischbach Voted In Favor Of Allowing The Potential Sales Tax Increase To Appear On The Ballot As An Amendment.** “Voting Yes […] Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/15/08]

### Despite Supporting It During Committee Hearings, Fischbach Reneged On Her Support For Allowing A Ballot Amendment To Go To The Voters On Raising Minnesota’s Sales Tax

**2006: The Senate Passed A Bill Allowing A Constitutional Amendment To Appear On The Electoral Ballot To Decide Whether Or Not To Raise Minnesota’s Sales Tax From 6.875 Percent From 6.5 Percent.** “Minnesota voters could decide this fall if they want to raise the state’s sales tax to pay for environment and arts spending. Senate members voted 42-22 on Monday to approve SF 2734, a proposal that puts a constitutional amendment on the ballot this fall to raise the sales tax to 6.875 percent from 6.5 percent.
The Tax Hike Was Projected To Generate $277 Million A Year To Go Towards Wildlife, Environmental Cleanup, And Arts Funding. “That would raise an estimated $277 million a year, which would be dedicated to paying for the state’s fish and wildlife, parks, trails and zoos, cleanup of polluted waters and arts, museums and public broadcasting.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/4/06]

Although She Initially Supported It During Committee Hearings, Fischbach Reneged On Her Support For The Bill, Arguing That Arts Funding Should Not Be Included With Environmental Funds. “After voting for it in committee hearings, Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, found herself voting against the final bill because the arts funding was tacked onto the environmental aspects, she said. ‘It’s so heavy right now,’ she said. ‘It should’ve been separated out and have people vote on both individually.’ Fischbach said she hoped the issues would be separated in conference committee.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/4/06]

1999: Fischbach Voted Against A $1.1 Billion Sales Tax Rebate That Primarily Benefited Middle And Lower Income Minnesotan Families

1999: The Minnesota State Senate Passed A $1.1 Billion Sales Tax Rebate Plan. “The state Senate on Monday approved Gov. Jesse Ventura’s $1.1 billion sales-tax rebate proposal, setting the stage for what probably will be contentious negotiations with the House over the type of rebate Minnesotans ultimately will get. The sales-tax rebate, which favors middle- and lower-income taxpayers, passed on a 44-21, nearly party-line vote in the DFL-controlled Senate. The vote came days after the GOP-controlled House passed a $1.1 billion income-tax rebate that gives the largest rebates to the wealthiest Minnesotans.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]

The Plan Called For The Distribution Of Rebate Checks Based On The Amount Of Sales Tax Paid By Various Tax Brackets. “Under the plan passed Monday, more than 2 million Minnesotans would get rebate checks late this summer based on state data that would estimate the amount of sales taxes paid by filers in various income brackets. That’s different from the House plan, which would rebate the first $150 of state income taxes from 1997 plus 20 percent of the remainder. In that scenario, a married couple with an adjusted gross income between $30,000 and $40,000 would get $406.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]

Compared To A Dueling Republican Plan, The Sales Tax Rebate Was Targeted Towards Households Making Less Than $130,000. “Under the Senate plan, the same couple could expect a little under $700. State research shows that equals about 30 percent of what a couple in that bracket would have paid in sales taxes over two years. Both plans would issue checks automatically. The Senate plan differs slightly from Ventura’s original proposal, which would have limited sales-tax rebates to property owners and renters who qualified for the 1997 property-tax rebate. The Senate plan would offer flat $50 rebates to people who weren’t eligible for that property-tax rebate. Johnson, the Senate bill’s chief sponsor, said single taxpayers making less than $65,000 and married taxpayers making less than $130,000 would do better under the sales-tax plan than under the income-tax plan.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]

Fischbach Voted Against The Plan. “How they voted The 44-21 roll call by which the Minnesota Senate voted to pass a $1.1 billion sales-tax rebate. A ‘yes’ vote was to pass the bill and a ‘no’ vote was against it.” […] Republicans Against (22) Dick Day, Owatonna; Steve Dille, Dassel; Michelle Fischbach, Paynesville; Dennis Frederickson, New Ulm; Sheila Kiscaden, Rochester; Dave Kleis, St. Cloud; David Knutson, Burnsville; Gary Laidig, Stillwater; Cal Larson, Fergus Falls; Arlene Lesewski, Marshall; Warren Limmer, Maple Grove; Thomas Neuvile, Northfield; Edward Oliver, Deephaven; Gen Olson, Minnetrista; Mark Ourada, Buffalo; Pat Pariseau, Farmington; Martha Robertson, Minnetonka; Claire Robling, Prior Lake; Linda Runbeck, Circle Pines; Kenric Scheevel, Preston; Dan Stevens, Mora.” [Star Tribune, 2/9/99]
**State Income Taxes**

**2005: Fischbach Voted Against Raising Taxes On The Wealthiest Minnesotans**

2005: The Minnesota Senate Passed A Tax Bill That Raised The Income Tax-Rate For Minnesota’s Highest Earners To 7.85 Percent And Created A New 10.65 Rate For Couples Making Over $250,000. “About 45,000 Minnesotans would pay higher income taxes to balance the books on $800 million in new education and health-care spending and property tax relief, in a tax bill the state Senate narrowly approved Friday. Senate members voted 35-28 to approve the DFL-sponsored tax bill, which creates a new high-end income tax bracket for at least four years to pay for spending programs the Senate has already approved. The income-tax rate for the highest earners now is 7.85 percent. The Senate proposal creates a 10.65 rate that would apply to married couples with incomes of $250,000 or more a year or singles earning more than $166,000. The new rate would be the highest in the nation, said Sen. Bill Belanger, R-Bloomington, the senior Republican on the tax committee.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/05]

*Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “How they voted The Minnesota Senate voted 35-28 Friday to approve SF2206, a bill that raises $800 million for state spending by adding a new, top-tier state income tax bracket. A ‘yes’ vote was a vote to approve the tax bill. Sen. Dean Johnson, DFL-Willmar: yes. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville: no.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/7/05]*

**2003: Fischbach Voted Against A Bill To Raise Taxes On The Wealthiest Minnesotans, Arguing That Raising Taxes Was The “Worst Thing For The Economy”**


**2003: Minnesota’s Tax Overhaul Law Had $1.3 Billion In Tax Increases To Balance The Budget, Including Higher Taxes On Minnesota Families Making Over $252,000 Per Year, Cigarette Purchases, And Property Taxes For Businesses.** “Minnesota’s highest wage earners, smokers and businesses would pay higher taxes under a bill passed Tuesday by the state Senate. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, passed 35-31. It includes about $1.3 billion in tax increases to balance the state’s $4.2 billion deficit and a controversial two-year freeze on local property taxes. […] The Senate bill would: Raise the tax on cigarettes by $1 per pack to $1.48. Create a new top income tax bracket of 9.4 percent for single Minnesotans earning $136,000 or more a year or families earning at least $252,000 a year. The current top bracket is 7.85 percent. Increase the statewide property tax on businesses. Prevent cities, counties and school districts from increasing their property tax levies for two years, with some exceptions.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/14/03]

*Fischbach Voted Against The Bill, Arguing That Raising Taxes Was The “Worst Thing For The Economy”*

**Arguing That Raising Taxes Was The “Worst Thing For The Economy.”** “Republicans argued that the bill will hurt businesses and make Minnesota less competitive with other states. ‘I can’t vote to raises taxes when that’s the worst thing for the economy,’ said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. The Senate bill does not include Gov. Tim Pawlenty’s proposed tax-free zones. Instead, the Senate puts an additional $29 million into aid for regional centers such as St. Cloud.” [St. Cloud Times, 5/14/03]

**Property Taxes**

**2001: Fischbach Supported A Massive Overhaul Of Minnesota’s Property Tax Laws**

2001: Minnesota’s State Legislature Passed A Property Tax Relief Package That Cut $840 Million. “Almost all legislators are touting the changes to the state’s property tax system as historic and a major accomplishment. A
A total of $840 million of property tax relief will be seen by Minnesota taxpayers this year. And about $700 million will be returned to Minnesotans around Labor Day in sales tax rebate checks.” [St. Cloud Times, 7/1/01]

Fischbach Said The Legislature Did A “Good Job” Regarding Tax Reform And Said It Was Something Legislators Could Be “Proud Of.” “Overall, I think we did a good job,” said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. ‘It just took awhile to get things done in the end.’ […] Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville Hit: Property tax reform. The Legislature provided about $840 million in property tax relief to owners of homes, apartments, businesses and cabins. That will come as the state starts paying the costs of K-12 education that property taxes support now. ‘The property tax reform is something that all of us can be proud of,’ she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 7/1/01]

**Other Tax Issues**

Fischbach Proposed A Bill Extending The Deadline To Meet Requirements For Tax Breaks Aimed At Businesses Who Employed Minnesota Workers

Fischbach Proposed A Bill To Extend The Deadline To Meet Requirements For Tax Breaks Aimed At Businesses Who Employed Local Minnesota Workers. “The bill would preserve benefits for certain businesses enrolled in JOBZ, a state program that gives tax breaks and other aid to businesses that pledge to create and retain jobs in Minnesota. The 40-plus businesses affected by the bill created enough jobs to initially meet their JOBZ pledge, but eliminated some of those jobs in 2009, bringing them out of compliance with their JOBZ agreement. Under the Fischbach-Hosch bill, such businesses would get an extra year to comply with their job-retention pledge, provided they had met all requirements in 2008.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/29/10]

2003: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Allow Stearns And Benton Counties To Charge A Tax On Gravel

2003: Fischbach Sponsored Legislation To Change A Loophole That Prevented Stearns And Benton Counties From Taxing Gravel To Be Used On Public Roads. “Stearns and Benton counties want to change a 20-year-old legal loophole that prevents them from charging a tax on gravel mined within their borders for use on public roads. Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, and Rep. Doug Stang, R-Cold Spring, are sponsoring bills to allow the two counties to charge the tax, which is paid by pit operators. The tax is up to 10 cents per cubic yard or 7 cents per ton.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/18/03]

Fischbach Said Repealing The Exemption Was A “Fairness Issue,” Since Other Minnesota Counties Were Allowed To Tax Gravel. “‘This is a fairness issue, that they’re the only two counties in the state that are not allowed to collect this tax,’ Fischbach said. Between 20 and 30 counties in the state charge the tax, she said.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/18/03]

1999: Fischbach Introduced Legislation Exempting Clothing Repairs And Alterations From State Sales Taxes, Which Would Have Cost The State $1.3 Million Annually

1999: Fischbach Introduced Legislation Exempting Clothing Repairs And Alterations From State Sales Taxes, Calling The Tax A “Quirk” In Minnesota’s Tax Code. “Exempting clothing repair and alterations from the state sales tax may seem like an odd idea. But Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, sees it as one way of clearing up a quirk in the state’s existing tax law. ‘If you bought a jacket and had it altered at the time of sale, you wouldn’t have to pay the sales tax on that alteration. But if you buy it and then come back later to have it altered, you have to pay sales tax,’ Fischbach said. ‘It’s one of the quirky things created in the 1987 tax bill. We need to sort out all those quirky little things.’” [St. Cloud Times, 3/30/99]
A Fiscal Analysis Showed That Fischbach’s Proposal Would Cost The State $1.3 Million Per Year. “Sen. Linda Scheid, DFL-Brooklyn Park, is carrying another bill designed to sort out quirks from the 1987 tax bill, and she said that if the clothing issue was not addressed, she would add it to her bill. A fiscal analysis shows that the change would cost the state about $1.3 million annually” [St. Cloud Times, 3/30/99]

1999: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Exempt Local Governments From State Sales Taxes

1999: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Exempt Local Governments From State Sales Taxes. “Stearns County Commissioner Rose Arnold thinks it doesn’t make any sense to have local government collecting property taxes to pay the state sales taxes. Her opinion is shared by many local government leaders across the state and several of the state’s legislators. Arnold and others were at the Capitol on Friday to convince legislators to remove this ‘tax on taxes.’ ‘County officials believe this tax on public expenditures is inappropriate and we urge you to take one easy step toward reducing property taxes, local fees and the price of government by once again eliminating the sales tax on local government purchases,’ Arnold told the House Tax Committee. Local governments were exempt from state sales tax until 1991, when the state changed the rules because it needed the money.” [St. Cloud Times, 1/30/99]
Significant Findings

✓ Fischbach defended Trump’s approach to trade, and said she hoped farmers would have patience while Trump pursued a better trade deal with China.
✓ Fischbach supported USMCA, and attacked Colin Peterson for “not doing enough” to support USMCA, even though Peterson was a strong supporter of the deal.

Trade

Fischbach Defended Trump’s Approach To Trade, And Said She Hoped Farmers Would Have Patience As Trump Pursued A Deal

Fischbach Defended Trump’s Approach To Trade, And Said She Hoped Farmers Would Have Patience As Trump Pursued A Deal. “Republican congressional hopeful Michelle Fischbach defended President Trump’s approach toward trade Tuesday after launching a bid for a western Minnesota district where crosscurrents between a fragile farm economy and the president’s popularity loom large. [...] Corn, soybeans and sugar beets are the big crops grown in that part of the state. Low commodity prices, combined with fallout from a tariff battle with China, have many farmers on edge. Fischbach said she hopes farmers have patience as the Trump administration pursues a deal.” [MPR News, 9/3/19]

Fischbach: “I Think China Has Been Ripping Our Farmers Off For Years And We Need To Play That Long Game And Make Sure That In The End We Have A Fair Trade Deal With China And That Our Farmers Are Well-Compensated.” ‘I think China has been ripping our farmers off for years and we need to play that long game and make sure that in the end we have a fair trade deal with China and that our farmers are well-compensated,’ she said in an interview Tuesday. Peterson is a significant player in the nation’s farm policy as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, a post he regained when Democrats took control of Congress this year.” [MPR News, 9/3/19]

USMCA

Fischbach Attacked Collin Peterson For “Not Doing Enough” To Support The Passage Of USMCA, Even Though Peterson Was A Strong Supporter Of USMCA

Fischbach Attacked Collin Peterson For “Not Doing Enough” To Support The Passage Of USMCA. “I will go back to USMCA and talk about that a little bit, because that was a big issue when...and he wasn’t doing enough for it. He was just kind of sitting back waiting for things to happen. He was not out there fighting for the people of the seventh District and trying to get that passed to make sure...because that could have been, that’s that is help now. That’s not something we’re waiting for, and he wasn’t out there fighting for that. It eventually, they eventually got around to it. But you didn’t hear him you know pounding on the table talking to Nancy Pelosi about getting this done, and that is the difference. I would pound on the table and I would tell them to get it done because that was necessary for the people of the Seventh District.”

May 2019: After Vice President Mike Pence Urged Peterson To Push For A House Vote On USMCA, Peterson Said He Would Be Happy To Make The Request. “At a Glyndon farm Thursday, Vice President Mike Pence urged Congressman Collin Peterson to get House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to bring up the USMCA
for a vote. The Democrat says he’s happy to make the request. The House Agriculture Committee Chairman says Pence, quote, ‘knows full well’ the Trump Administration still needs to submit the USMCA to the house to be considered.’ [KVRR, 5/10/19]

December 2019: Peterson Celebrated An Agreement Between House Democrats And White House On USMCA, And Highlighted That He Had Supported The Agreement For Months. “House Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson released the following statement today following the announcement of a deal between House Democrats and The White House on United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) ‘I have been pushing for months to get this deal to the finish line, and this announcement is great news for farmers, businesses and workers in Western Minnesota and nationwide,’ said Peterson. ‘The threat of leaving NAFTA without a deal would have been devastating, and this deal provides needed certainty for our producers. This agreement makes updates to how the three countries will address biotechnology, and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues. The USMCA also preserves the market our farmers are currently accessing while making modest gains for our dairy, poultry, and wheat growers in the Canadian market. Rural America has faced many hurdles and challenges with these trade wars, and passing the USMCA is a step in the right direction.’” [Rep. Collin Peterson, Press Release, 12/10/19]

Fischbach Applauded President Trump’ For Signing The USMCA Into Law, And Called It A “Great Deal” For Farmers And Manufacturers

Fischbach Applauded President Trump’ For Signing The USMCA Into Law, And Called It A “Great Deal” For Farmers And Manufacturers. “President @realDonaldTrump today signed the #USMCA into law. This is a great trade deal for our American farmers and manufacturers and another example of #PromisesMadePromisesKept” [Twitter, Michelle Fischbach, 1/29/20]
Veterans & Military Family Issues

### Significant Findings

- ✓ In 2004, Fischbach opposed a tax bill that included an income-tax checkoff for veterans who served in the War on Terror.

### Military Personnel

**2005: Fischbach Introduced Legislation To Allow Service Members With Drivers Licenses From A Military Branch To Skip The Driving Test When Applying For A Minnesota License**

In 2005, Fischbach introduced legislation to allow service members with drivers licenses from a military branch to skip the driving test when applying for a Minnesota license. "Military personnel with a driver’s license from their armed forces branch could skip the driving test when applying for a Minnesota license, if a bill that passed the Senate on Monday becomes law. State law already allows the Department of Public Safety to waive the driving test for residents of other states who hold valid licenses, said Sen. Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville, the bill’s chief Senate sponsor. Her bill, SF1095/HF1053, would extend that exemption to military license holders as well, she said. ‘It’s another simple way we can help veterans out in the state of Minnesota,’ she said." [St. Cloud Times, 4/19/05]

The Bill Passed The Senate 63-0. “Senators approved the bill 63-0 on Monday, with all Central Minnesota legislators supporting it.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/19/05]

**2004: Fischbach Voted Against A Wide-Ranging Tax Bill That Included An Income-Tax Checkoff For Veterans Who Served In The War On Terror**

In 2004, Fischbach voted against a wide-ranging tax bill that included an income-tax checkoff for veterans who served in the War on Terror. “The Senate passed a tax bill Thursday that includes more state aid for cities in outstate Minnesota and will prolong the St. Cloud area’s local sales tax if voters approve. The wide-ranging bill also would give bonuses to veterans of the war on terrorism through an income-tax checkoff, a proposal pushed by Sen. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud. However, Kleis and Central Minnesota’s other Republican legislators voted against the bill, saying it raises taxes on businesses. The bill passed the DFL-controlled Senate 38-28.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

Fischbach Voted Against The Bill. “Four area Republicans voted no on the Senate tax bill: Michelle Fischbach of Paynesville, Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Paul Koering of Fort Ripley and Betsy Wergin of Princeton.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

 Republicans Who Opposed The Bill Said It Raised Taxes On Businesses. “The wide-ranging bill also would give bonuses to veterans of the war on terrorism through an income-tax checkoff, a proposal pushed by Sen. Dave Kleis of St. Cloud. However, Kleis and Central Minnesota’s other Republican legislators voted against the bill, saying it raises taxes on businesses. The bill passed the DFL-controlled Senate 38-28.” [St. Cloud Times, 4/30/04]

### Veterans’ Administration
2001: Fischbach Cosponsored Legislation To Build 120 Affordable Housing Units At The St. Cloud VA Medical Center, But The Amount Of Funding Was Unspecified

Young women and men who served in the United States armed forces have experienced a range of challenges, and many are at risk of becoming homeless. To address this need, a bill with bipartisan support was introduced in the Minnesota Legislature to help jump-start a plan to build 120 units of affordable housing at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. The bill, introduced by Central Minnesota legislators, would offer funding for housing projects serving veterans who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness throughout the state.

Central Minnesota legislators who introduced the bill include Reps. Joe Opatz, DFL-St. Cloud; Leslie Schumacher, DFL-Santiago; Steve Dehler, R-St. Joseph; Jim Knoblach, R-St. Cloud and Sondra Erickson, R-Princeton; and Sens. Dave Kleis, R-St. Cloud, and Michelle Fischbach, R-Paynesville. [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/01]

The amount of funding provided is unspecified in the bill, but would be transferred from the general fund, to provide loans and grants to assist in the development, construction, acquisition or rehabilitation of supportive and permanent housing to serve veterans and single adults at risk of becoming homeless or homeless. [St. Cloud Times, 3/9/01]
Appendix I – Personal Financial Disclosures

2019 – Federal Personal Financial Disclosure

Net Worth

2019: Fischbach Had An Estimated Net Worth Between $53,014 And $645,000

2019: Fischbach Had An Estimated Net Worth Between $53,014 And $645,000. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

Earned Income

2018: Fischbach Reported $99,500 In Earned Income

Through September 2019, Fischbach Reported $33,200 In Earned Income. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Amount (YTD)</th>
<th>Amount (2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life</td>
<td>Spouse Salary N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Right to Life</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Minnesota</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$63,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Minnesota Builders Association</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>$33,200.00</td>
<td>$99,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Source: Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

Assets & Unearned Income

2019: Fischbach Reported Between $253,014 And $720,000 In Assets

2019: Fischbach Reported Between $253,014 And $720,000 In Assets. [Fischbach 2019 Public Financial Disclosure Report, filed 10/2/19]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SP/DC/JT</th>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Year-End Value</th>
<th>Type Of Income</th>
<th>Amount Of Income (YTD)</th>
<th>Amount Of Income (2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>American Fund Balanced Fund A</td>
<td>$15,001</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>American Fund Capital World</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>American Fund Euro-Pacific Growth Fund</td>
<td>$1,001</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>American Fund Growth Fund of America A</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>American Fund Retirement Target Date Fund</td>
<td>$100,001</td>
<td>None</td>
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Liabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Creditor</th>
<th>Date Incurred</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Amount Of Liability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JT</td>
<td>Central Minnesota Credit Union</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>Mortgage on Rental Property</td>
<td>$15,001 - $50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Great Lakes Student Loan</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>$50,001 - $100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Nelnet</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>$10,000 - $50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name Of Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>St. Cloud Hospital Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Agreements

2019: Fischbach Reported No Agreements

Appendix II – Campaign Finance

Items of Interest

✓ As of the first quarter of 2020, Fischbach’s Congressional campaign had raised $582,778 and spent $280,671.

✓ 22% of Fischbach’s fundraising came from PACs.

✓ Fischbach received tens of thousands of dollars from Washington Republican leadership PACs, including Reps. McCarthy and Scalise.

Toplines

Fischbach’s Congressional Campaign Raised $582,778 And Spent $280,671 As Of March 31, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Total Receipts</th>
<th>Total Disbursements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Indivs</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$592,778.06</td>
<td>$453,603.07</td>
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</table>

[FEC Committee Candidate and Committee Viewer, accessed 4/21/20]

Fischbach’s Congressional Campaign Received Tens Of Thousands In Donations From Washington Republican Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fischbach Donations From Republican Campaigns And Leadership PACs Donating More Than $5,000</th>
<th>Associated MOC</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority Committee PAC–MCPAC</td>
<td>Rep. McCarthy</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Eye Of The Tiger PAC</td>
<td>Rep. Scalise</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Majority Fund</td>
<td>Sen. Tillis</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badlands PAC</td>
<td>Rep. Cramer</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Leadership And Inspiring New Enterprise PAC</td>
<td>Rep. Luetkemeyer</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-PAC</td>
<td>Rep. Stefanik</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone Star Leadership PAC</td>
<td>Rep. Burgess</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value In Electing Women PAC</td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winning For Women, Inc. PAC</td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[FEC, accessed 4/21/20; OpenSecrets, accessed 4/21/20]

Fischbach’s Campaign Committee Received 71.8% Of Her Contributions From Individual Contributors 28.2% From Other Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Of Fischbach Career Congressional Campaign Committee Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Contributors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Committees/Candidates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[FEC.gov, accessed 4/21/20]
NOTE: OpenSecrets has not yet posted contribution information for Fischbach’s campaign, hence why detailed contribution data sorted by industry is not yet available.

### State Campaigns – Minnesota

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Candidate (Office Sought) or Committee</th>
<th>Raised</th>
<th>Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for Lieutenant Governor</td>
<td>$12,008.00</td>
<td>$27,600.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-13</td>
<td>$36,909.81</td>
<td>$33,075.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-13</td>
<td>$32,742.44</td>
<td>$30,197.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$29,527.83</td>
<td>$26,985.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$4,305.01</td>
<td>$4,023.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$4,733.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$50,147.60</td>
<td>$52,513.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$15,019.47</td>
<td>$9,796.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$60,636.12</td>
<td>$60,939.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$54,093.24</td>
<td>$53,344.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$18,316.32</td>
<td>$20,642.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Michelle Fischbach for State Senate SD-14</td>
<td>$91,666.16</td>
<td>$89,193.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $405,372.00 $413,047.33

[Minnesota Secretary Of State, accessed 8/14/19]
Appendix III – Paid Media Summary

NOTE: As of 3/6/20, there is no available paid media for Michelle Fischbach.
### Appendix IV – Bill Sponsorships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>SF2875</td>
<td>Constitutional amendment for constitutional standard for abortion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF010</td>
<td>Education appropriations caps repeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF082</td>
<td>MinnesotaCare health care providers gross earnings tax rate reduction and elimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF0625</td>
<td>School districts debt service equalization program eligibility expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF1105</td>
<td>Central Minnesota area learning center establishment appropriation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF1111</td>
<td>Grade A milk producers well water testing requirement modification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF1371</td>
<td>Farm crisis assistance contracted personnel employment status clarification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>SF1552</td>
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