

Quarterly Issues Programs List

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Stations: KWWK, KDCZ, KROC-FM, KYBA

January 1st, 2023 through March 31st, 2023

SECTION I. Issues

A) Women’s Rights – Abortion rights in Minnesota were already protected because a Doe v. Gomez, a 1995 Minnesota Supreme Court decision, but this became a top issue following the U.S. Supreme Court decision last summer to vacate federal abortion rights and leave the issue to the states.

B) Drug & Alcohol Abuse –There were 1,286 overdose deaths reported to MDH last year which is up 22% from the 2020 total. This averages more than three people dying every day from an overdose.

C) Traffic Safety– - Minnesota had more than 400 traffic deaths. The four leading causes of traffic fatalities in Minnesota are impaired driving, distracted driving, lack of seat belt use, and speed.

D) Mental Health – A nationwide three-digit dialing code – 988 – was launched in 2022 as a way to access suicide prevention and crisis support. Since it became available calls to Minnesota’s four call centers have increased 44%. Minnesota has also seen a 173% increase in web chats (since January 2022) and 250% increase in texts to 988.

E) Public Health – In 2022 Minnesota nursing homes reported staffing shortages that were worse than anywhere else in the country. A Minnesota Department of Health survey confirmed health care worker burnout and show workforce shortage trends are affecting a wide range of health care professionals.

SECTION II – RESPONSIVE PROGRAMS

MINNESOTA MATTERS, hosted by Scott Peterson, Tasha Redel, Bill Werner, Mark Dorenkamp and Mike Grim is a weekly locally produced public affairs program that discusses matters of importance to Minnesotans.

Minnesota Matters runs every Sunday morning on KROC-FM, KWWK, KDCZ, and KYBA from 6:00 a.m. and 6:30 a.m.

January 15th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Women’s Rights, Abortion, Public Health, Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Traffic Safety

Bill Werner outlined how top democratic legislatures have made abortion rights their top priority during this session at the state capitol. Werner shares what lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are saying for and against abortion.

Werner also discusses a new bill to legalize recreational marijuana. The bill is in its infancy and would need to clear several committees before being considered. Potential benefits and harm of legal cannibals are discussed.

Mayo Clinic Dr. Andrew Storm joins to talk about the new American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for childhood obesity. The doctor says 20% of American kids are now classified as obese and this has caused new issues like liver failure and sleep apnea in kids – Storm explains these issues weren't seen 30-years ago and are directly tied to obesity. The doctor discusses medications and surgeries that can help with childhood obesity and ultimately improve their mental and physical health.

Mike Hansen of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety joins the program to recap the holiday DWI crackdown. Hansen said from Thanksgiving to New Years there were over 2,200 Minnesotans cited for impaired driving.

January 22nd, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Education, Women's Rights, Abortion Rights, Public Health

Bill Werner joins to discuss the new state budget proposal rolled out by Governor Walz which contains tax credits for child care and increases in funding for education.

State democrats continue to push a bill that would remove a wide variety of anti-abortion laws off of the books. Werner recaps how top lawmakers are arguing for and against the bill.

New Data shows that Minnesota hospitals are having problems discharging patients to continued care settings because a lack of capacity and staffing shortages. President and CEO of Minnesota Hospitals Association, Rahul Koranne, says nearly 2,000 patients are stuck in hospitals which makes it extremely difficult for new patients to receive care. The doctor says the ripple effect from this gridlock is directly impacting healthcare in all parts of the state.

January 29th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Health, Public Education

The hosts discuss Governor Tim Walz's state budget proposal and infrastructure plan that includes borrowing but also taps part of the state's nearly \$18 billion budget surplus. The budget plan calls for \$12 billion for programs including education, child care and family tax credits, plus free school lunch and breakfast, and \$4 billion for economic development.

And pointing to last weekend's mass shooting in California, the governor asked the legislature to require background checks on all firearm sales, allow courts to take firearms away from those who pose an immediate threat to themselves or others, set the minimum age of 21 to purchase military style firearms, and ban high-capacity magazines. Reaction from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle was shared during the program.

A new state report showing how Minnesota's teacher shortage continues to expand is discussed and the hosts are joined by Education Minnesota President Denise Speck. Speck explains that 90% of Minnesota schools are experiencing staffing issues, what is causing the shortage, and how it impacts learning.

February 5th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Women's Rights, Abortion Rights, Public Health

This week, Governor Tim Walz signed a bill that puts the fundamental right to abortion into Minnesota law. The show discusses that measure, how lawmakers reacted, and speculation about possible legal challenges.

US Senator Tina Smith joined the program to talk about a bill that she introduced that would expand access to job protected family and medical leave. The Job Protection Act would be the largest expansion of FMLA since its enactment back in 1993.

February 12th, 2023 Issues Discussed: Traffic Safety, Public Health, School Safety, Transportation

State Office of Traffic Safety director Mike Hansen joined the program to talk about school bus stop arms. The State Department of Public Safety is awarding \$1.4 million to 19 Minnesota schools and transportation companies to install stop ARM camera systems on school buses.

A new report by patient rights advocate.org shows a large majority of hospitals are continuing to hide the cost of care from consumers, including hospitals right here in Minnesota, Cynthia Fisher, founder and chairwoman of PPRA, joined the show to discuss the findings and why price transparency is so important for patients.

February 26th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Public Health, Labor Shortages

The FDA is expected to approve over the counter naloxone in March and addiction specialists in Minnesota think it could save a lot of lives. Hazelton, Betty Ford's doctor, Alta DeRoo, joined the program to discuss opioid addiction and how this product is used to reverse the overdose and save somebody.

Workforce shortages continue to impact nursing homes and assisted living centers around the state. Leading Age Minnesota president and CEO. Carrie Thurlow joined to discuss the crisis and possible solutions.

March 5th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Education, Public Health, Labor Shortage

Local lawmakers tackled education funding at the state capitol this week and this program recapped the discussions. One report showed that two-thirds of Minnesota 8th graders can't read at that grade level.

Sue Canuteson of Samaritan Bethany in Rochester, joined the program to talk about the labor shortage in the caregiving field and what that means for patients. She explains how staffing issues caused by low wages are negatively impacting senior care.

March 12th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Health, Traffic Safety, Crime

Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced this week he is opening a civil investigation of Kia and Hyundai, prompted by a huge increase of thefts, particularly in the Twin Cities area. The attorney general says many Kias and Hyundais do not have industry standard anti-theft technology. The hosts discuss and share reactions from state lawmakers.

Health officials are highlighting the importance of colon cancer screenings this month. Doctor Andrew Storm from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester joins to say testing and early detection can be a lifesaver. He encourages everyone eligible for screening, to get it done and explains that colorectal cancer is one of the few cancers that is preventable by having a screening exam. The doctor also shares signs to look for and additional information about colon cancer.

Dustin Lee, CEO of Prairie senior cottages, joined the program to discuss Alzheimer's and memory care across rural Minnesota. Dustin shares just how exhausted his caregivers are throughout the pandemic and discusses the staffing shortage his industry is facing.

March 19th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Health, Suicide, Labor Shortage, Gambling

This week the hosts discuss Gambling Awareness Month, continue their series on workforce shortages affecting long-term healthcare centers, explain how more Minnesotans are utilizing the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, and outline how lawmakers are debating free school lunches at Minnesota schools. Susan Sheridan Tucker, executive Director of the Minnesota Alliance on Problem Gambling, joined to offer tips on how to gamble responsibly and offer recourses for anyone that has or thinks they might have an addiction.

Representative Kim Hicks talks about what the legislature's doing to address the long-term care staffing crisis.