



2020 Legislative Session Summary

Minnesota's 2020 Legislative Session will be remembered for the challenge of conducting legislative business in an open and transparent manner while maintaining social distance to avoid spreading the Coronavirus. Many hearings conducted by ZOOM became the norm. This format provided little opportunity for the normal give-and-take that is customary at the Capitol.

Because of the pandemic, this Session will also be remembered for the rapid change of fortune for the State Budget. The February Revenue Forecast projected a surplus of approximately \$1.5 billion for the biennium (two-year budget cycle) ending June 30, 2021. Instead, just two months later, an updated revenue projection predicted a \$2.5 billion revenue shortfall for this same timeframe.

The Legislature adjourned in May without coming to terms on a State Capital Budget or Bonding Bill to repair or build public facilities. However, Senate Republican and House DFL Leadership – along with Governor Walz – did arrive at a bonding target in the closing days of the Regular Session. It is expected that a Special Session would include approval of a bonding package.

Before the Session and State Budget were reshaped by the Coronavirus, AASP-MN was pursuing legislation to ensure insurance coverage and payment for repairs conducted in accordance with original vehicle manufacturer repair procedures. The proposal received an "Informational Hearing" on March 3rd before the Minnesota House Commerce Committee.

AASP-MN prepared and delivered testimony outlining the repair industry's position in support of the proposal (citing the industry's concern for vehicle safety and liability for proper repairs) while the Insurance Federation of Minnesota, LKQ and Automotive Recyclers of Minnesota voiced opposition. The hearing did not involve debating the specific language of the proposal. No action by the Committee was expected and none was taken.

Whether AASP-MN pursues this issue in 2021 will depend on if we can find common ground with the insurance industry or whether the make-up of the Legislature so changes that there is an opportunity for the repair industry to prevail in presenting a modified version of what we originally proposed.

As we look ahead to the 2021 Session, we will be seeking input from members to shape our legislative agenda. Members are encouraged to bring any issues or concerns they have with current state law to the Association for discussion at the Government and Regulatory Affairs Committee.