

# Opinion

Happy  
Father's  
Day



## America's Promise Is Ordered Liberty



**Lee Hamilton**  
Center on  
Representative  
Government

American representative democracy holds out a valuable promise to the world. We can sum it up in a phrase: ordered liberty. And this promise is the essential promise of America. Our system of government offers a beacon of hope to the world with its ideal of ordered liberty. As Americans, we believe all

people should be able to govern themselves, and that leaders should be accountable to those whom they would lead. As the Declaration of Independence says, governments derive their power from the consent of the governed.

Liberty is one of the rights listed in the Declaration, along with life and the pursuit of happiness. Americans treasure our liberty and our freedoms, which are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. But liberty doesn't come without limits. A functioning society requires a balance between freedom and structure, between liberty and order.

How do we maintain this balance? America's Founding Fathers gave this a lot of thought. I have, over the years, spent a lot of time reading the statements made by the founders; and I am impressed by how often they wrote about virtue as essential to self-government. They made clear that our leaders must be people of virtue. They also believed it took virtuous citizens to choose good leaders.

James Madison extolled the "great republican principle" that people would have the "virtue and intelligence" to select

**Liberty See Page 5**

## Destroying Family Farms, Communities And Our Democracy

By **Darvin Bentlage**

I love farming and have been doing it all my life, but I told my kids not to come back to the farm, because there's no future in it. That's the sad truth.

Over the last year on Capitol Hill, there have been multiple hearings and bills and even an executive order to address what is going on out here in rural America, but little to nothing is getting done. For the last three decades, roughly 40 U.S. family cattle operations have gone out of business every day. It's time to end the talk and campaigning and actually fix the problem.

I'm 66 and a 4th generation cattle and grain farmer from southwest Missouri. Even though it's sometimes difficult and dangerous work, I've always loved raising cattle and crops and making the land better for the next generation — and better for my kids and grandkids to come back to.

But, things have changed, and not for the better. They aren't changing because of inevitability or technological efficiency. There's a very large "elephant in the room" that's making it worse for all of us.

The predominant system of agriculture I am working in now has been intentionally set up against me and current and future farming generations. Today's corporate controlled system is bad for farmers, bad for consumers, bad for rural and urban communities and economies, bad for our environment and our

climate, and bad for democracy.

We are in this position because the rules (laws, policies and regulations) have been written, and lobbied and paid for by corporate special interests. We are in this position because of corporate-written, bad Farm Bills and bad trade agreements (the main drivers of our farm and food system).

We are here because many of our elected "representatives" don't really represent us, their constituents or the vast majority of Americans. We're here because we have a democratic process controlled by that "elephant in the room" — billion-dollar multinational corporations.

They are planning and implementing our demise. It's their business model. Without competition, they can push everyone else out of the market, then they win and take all the wealth (and land).

Some of the results: In 30 years, the U.S. has 25 percent fewer cattle farmers. In 30 years, nearly 90 percent of U.S. hog farmers were put out of business. And, the average age of a farmer is nearing 60 years old.

We're importing billions of pounds of beef from around the world, and consumers are paying record high prices, while cattle farmers struggle. In 2021, the U.S. imported 3.35 billion pounds (with a "b") of beef and 1.8 million live cattle.

Here are a few glaring results

**Family farms See Page 5**

## Legislators - Finish The Job You Were Elected To Do



### A Drop of Ink

By **Reed Anfinson**  
Publisher

All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter.

**Edmund Burke**  
British Statesman, Philosopher  
1729-1797

As the Minnesota Legislature wound down toward its adjournment at midnight May 22, there was a glimmer of hope that significant action would be taken to aid citizens, businesses, schools, nursing homes, community infrastructure and day care facilities.

With a more than \$9.25 billion surplus projected along with over \$1 billion in federal American Rescue Plan cash, both parties were looking to get what they wanted: Republicans tax relief for Minnesotans and additional public safety funding; Democrats more funds for schools, infrastructure and day care. In most cases, each wanted a little of what the other side sought, but found it impossible to reach a compromise on how much.

At a joint press conference, Democratic Gov. Tim Walz, Democratic House Speaker Melissa Hortman, and Republican Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller said they had reached an agreement on a framework that included \$4 billion in tax relief and \$4 billion in spending. Another

\$4 billion in expected future income over budgeted expenditures would be left alone as a hedge against a fall in state revenues.

Minnesota sports fans could relate to the eventual outcome: raised expectations and dashed hopes. Though the framework was in place, the real work of agreeing on details led to a stalemate between the DFL-controlled House and the Republican-controlled Senate. A combination of political ambition and philosophical differences on government spending versus providing for the needs of citizens continue to make reaching a compromise doubtful — we hope we are wrong.

Among the legislation waiting to be passed is \$1 billion in funding for health and human services facilities.

At an event Walz and republican state Sen. Jim Abeler attended last week, the two applauded the bipartisan legislation that led to the construction of a new psychiatric floor at Children's Minnesota hospital in the Twin Cities.

While there, Abeler told Walz there was a dire need for immediate action to help Minnesota's nursing homes. "Child care will get by," Abeler is quoted as telling Walz in an MPR story. "Nursing homes and group homes might not."

"I think you can do both," Walz replied. The governor has the sole authority to call a special session, but before he does, he needs to know that Republicans and Democrats have worked out agreements that will pass their respective bodies.

"The public, Minnesotans want us to get this done, and I will still contend we're very, very close," Walz said last week. "I've done this long enough to know what far away looks like. And I am committed to coming back to that table to reach a com-

promise."

"If folks are committed to working towards achieving the goals for the people in the state of Minnesota, we can get it done," House Speaker Melissa Hortman, DFL-Brooklyn Park, said in an interview with MPR.

While not ruling out a special session, Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller isn't optimistic about its chances. He has questioned whether or not the two sides can reach a compromise.

Throw into the mix the November general election with all 134 House seats, 67 Senate seats, and the governor's office in the ballot, and political calculation enters the equation. With each passing day, the nature of Minnesota's politicians descends further into political reelection scheming rather than governing.

Republican-endorsed gubernatorial candidate Scott Jensen would like to see any DFL-supported legislation blocked in hopes that Republicans win the House, Senate and governor's office in November. He ignores the immediate needs of Minnesotans in favor of his political ambitions.

Behind the scenes in St. Paul, committee chairs, representatives of the governor's office, and state agency heads are working to resolve differences that could lead to action in a special session.

What's at stake?

- Funding for state and local construction and infrastructure projects.

The Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is urging a special session. "Our cities are still reeling from hardships created and exacerbated by the pandemic and the staggering increase in inflation. We urge leadership to agree to a special session and pass legislation that provides meaning-

ful investments in our communities this year," its president Luerne Mayor Patrick Baustian said.

There is also \$7.3 billion in federal transportation project funding, \$282 million per year, for which the application process has already started. Minnesota can't access it without approving matching funding. Republicans say, "don't worry, the funds aren't going anywhere" while the governor and transportation organizations say we could lose out to other states if a bill isn't passed.

- Tax relief. The tax relief bill would cut taxes on Social Security benefits for everyone, cut income taxes, and give Minnesotans property tax relief.

- Public safety. Funds for both additional support for law enforcement training and community-based crime prevention are possible.

- Education funding. Rural Minnesota's school are always behind the metropolitan areas in their funding. We need support for our schools. Meanwhile, increasing mandates requires local funding without adequate state compensation.

- Guns: While we like to see gun legislation enacted that a vast majority of Americans agree is reasonable, we know such efforts would derail all special session efforts to accomplish needed and meaningful action. Get a gill ready for the next session.

We fully agree government waste must be addressed. We agree financial prudence is justified in the face of rapidly rising costs. At the same time, the current Legislature has left its work undone. Our legislators must do the job they were elected to do rather than scheming for what they might be able to do in 2023.

### Swift County Monitor-News Staff

Reed Anfinson - Publisher - reed@monitor-news.com  
John W. Fragodt - Sports Editor/Reporter - sports@monitor-news.com  
Barb Erickson - Advertising Sales - ads@monitor-news.com  
Nancy Ridler - Graphic Design/Sales - auctions@monitor-news.com  
Mary Jane Amundson - Receptionist/Bookkeeper - ads@monitor-news.com  
Mike Mallow - Graphic Artist/Layout

USPS 5309-2000 / Published every Wednesday at  
101 12th Street South, Benson, MN 56215 320-843-4111  
Postmaster - Send address changes to address above

#### Subscription Rates:

	*Five-County area	Minnesota	Out-of-state
Year	\$45	\$50 (No P&C)	\$57 (No P&C)
Six months	\$33	\$38 (No P&C)	\$44 (No P&C)

\*Swift-Pope-Stevens-Chippewa-Kandiyo

Add \$7 for Peach & Canary outside five-county area

