

MN Legislative Commission to End Poverty (LCEP)

<http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/lcep/>

Eighteen legislators (9 Senators and 9 House of Representatives – 50% Democrat, 50% Republican) and two citizens are serving on the legislative Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020. They have accepted an ambitious, risky, and absolutely necessary challenge.

The Commission was authorized in the 2006 session. Members were appointed in the 2007 session, and the commission held its first meeting on June 27th. The state statute that created the Commission requires the Commission to make recommendations on how to end poverty to the full legislature by December 15, 2008.

The Legislative Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota will be conducting listening sessions throughout Minnesota this fall and winter. These sessions are the opportunity for legislators to meet with people living in poverty, see the impact of poverty on communities throughout the state and hear whether citizens have the will to support significant new efforts to eliminate poverty in Minnesota. They bring to life the more formal presentations commission members are receiving in their Capitol meetings.

Their FIRST site visit will be to Duluth, MN on **Thursday September 27, 2007**, followed by visits to Grand Rapids and Virginia also on the 27th and 28th. Their Duluth agenda is as follows:

DULUTH, MN LCEP Site Visit, Thursday September 27		
7:00am	Introduction to Agenda	Site TBD
7:15 am	Bus #13 or #11 to Damiano Center	Speakers are currently being scheduled. Please contact Kim Crawford (625-1739), Stan Kaitfors (726-1665), or Patrice Critchley-Menor (724-9111) for scheduling arrangements. The Public is welcome to attend at any of these sites.
8:00 am	Damiano Center	
9:30am	San Marco	
10:30am	CHUM Drop-In / Emergency Shelters	
11:30 am	Life House	
12:30 pm	Community Action Duluth	
1:30 pm – 2:00pm	transport to College of St. Scholastica	
2:00 pm	Press Conference and Open Public Forum	
3:00 pm	depart for Floodwood, MN	

As you can see, the Duluth agenda is not your typical legislative hearing where members sit in one location listening to scores of elected officials, agency directors and the general public. Instead, Commission members will go out into the community and meet first-hand with low-income people where they spend time (at the Damiano, on the city bus, in their residences etc.)

Local organizations and citizens who work with and are passionate about people in poverty are encouraged to attend the various listening sessions throughout the community. At the encouragement of the Poverty Commission, we would note the following:

- Because of the far reaching effects of poverty, it is unlikely that all aspects (children, elderly, health care, mental health, veterans - the list goes on and on) can be addressed in the entire 7.5 hours of their time in Duluth let alone the 5.5 hours of scheduled public hearing time.
- There is a strong preference to hear from people experiencing or having directly experienced poverty. Agencies or programs who wish to articulate a particular message to the Commission should consider having that message delivered by a consumer or client.
- Prepare written comments or a message that can be left with the Commission members and staff.

If anyone has questions about the Commission on Poverty visit, feel free to call the contact people as noted above. Names of speakers desiring to testify or written comments to be delivered to Commission members may also be forwarded to Kim C., Patrice C. or Stan K. We look forward to a successful visit!

Peace,

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