

Primary results put the squeeze on superdelegates to back Obama

Barack Obama's decisive primary victory in the North Carolina and Hillary Rodham Clinton's close call in Indiana allows Obama to maintain his lead in all categories: delegates, popular vote and elections. And that will make it increasingly difficult for uncommitted superdelegates to deny him the Democratic nomination. Still, Clinton shows no sign of going away.

By **DOUG STONE**

Sen. Barack Obama won decisively in the North Carolina primary (56 to 42 percent) Tuesday night while Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton won a close race in Indiana (51 to 49 percent), but the consensus among analysts was that Obama's victory carried more weight, as well as more delegates.

Adam Nagourney reported in *The New York Times* that "for Mr. Obama, the apparently divided outcome came after a brutal period in which he was on the defensive over the inflammatory comments of his former pastor. That he was able to hold his own under those circumstances should allow him to make a case that he has proved his resilience in the face of questions about race, values and patriotism — the very kinds of issues that the Clinton campaign has suggested would leave him vulnerable in the general election.

"When paired with Mr. Obama's comfortable victory in North Carolina, a bigger state, Mrs. Clinton's performance in Indiana did not seem to be enough to cut into Mr. Obama's lead in pledged delegates or in his overall lead in the popular vote. And because Mrs. Clinton did not appear to come particularly close in North Carolina, despite a substantial effort there, she lost an opportunity to sow new doubts among Democratic leaders about Mr. Obama's general-election appeal."

With record turnout in both states, "Obama took an overwhelming 91 percent of the black vote in North Carolina, according to exit polls, with Clinton taking only six percent. Clinton took 59 percent of the white vote, compared with 36 percent for Obama, according to the polls."



REUTERS

Sen. Barack Obama speaks to supporters at his North Carolina and Indiana primary election night rally in Raleigh.

The delegate tally

The exit polls also showed that 81 percent said that the economic recession had affected them. Among those voters, "fifty-two percent ...said they think Obama is better suited to improve the economy, compared with 42 percent who said Clinton. Among voters who said they have been affected by the economy, Obama took 55 percent of the vote, compared with 41 percent for Clinton."

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THE DAILY GLEAN

Where every buttie knows your name

By DAVID BRAUER

A Scott County judge in the cross hairs: Jerome Abrams gets to rule on whether Elko's Bullseye Saloon violates the state's tobacco ban with its theater nights. In court Tuesday, the Bullseye's attorney said the state can't define art, and notes "Cheers" was about people in a bar, according to the Strib's Mary Lynn Powell. The PiPress's Jason Hoppin adds that bar employees say "they or their patrons often assume characters such as Garth Brooks, Julia Roberts and others." (Maybe they should call the place "Cognitive Dissonance Tap.") The judge referenced Shakespeare in the Park when he observed the smoking-ban exemption is not limited to places with stages. This should be fun.

More smoking adjudication: Abrams must first rule on the state's request for a temporary injunction against the bar's maneuver. A full trial is set for June. A similar St. Louis County case begins later this month.

An ex-U.S. senator driving a Metro Mobility van? WCCO's Pat Kessler provides a fascinating report on Dean Barkley, the man then-Gov. Jesse Ventura appointed to fill Paul Wellstone's seat. Barkley, who gets health benefits from the bus company, refuses to use Senate access to make big bucks lobbying (he holsters his Senate-floor access card). He again floats the notion of running for the Senate as an independent this year.

For the first time, the state House could give cops the right to stop motorists for not wearing seat belts, the PiPress's Bill Salisbury reports. Gov. Pawlenty said he would accept two other safety provisions: Newly licensed teens can't drive late, and kids under 8 must be belted into booster seats. Turns out Pawlenty didn't want one provision dropped, as DFLers asserted. One House leader predicts passage of the bill contain-

ing the three safety measures.

We learned a lot more about the Strib's financial health yesterday. First, City Pages' Jeff Shaw demonstrated financial legerdemain by revealing that Strib debt is trading under 60 cents on the dollar. Investor disdain might not indicate looming bankruptcy — the recent credit crunch has pummeled most debt-speculators, and no one's bullish on media investments — but it's a meaningful datapoint.

More : After Shaw's story broke, Strib parent Avista Capital Partners finally handed one of their reporters some inside dope; Neal St. Anthony disclosed that Avista was "forced" to write off \$75 million of their \$100 million investment. St. Anthony amplified Shaw's info, noting that \$96 million in subordinated debt trades for 10 cents on the dollar. Citing cost cuts and unspecified revenue-producing investments, an Avista memo states, "We view 2008 as the year to prove a recovery is possible." So far, so bad.

Now it's Duluth's turn to close a steel-truss bridge. According to the hard-working Hoppin, two lanes of Duluth's Blatnik Bridge were closed after a contractor expressed concerns about recent weight additions. State engineers will buttress 16 gusset plates. The Strib's Jim Foti says work will be completed by mid-June. The gussets are undamaged, but 2 inches of concrete has been added in the last decade, prompting the precaution.

Medtronic will cut 350 Minnesota jobs, according to the PiPress's Christopher Snowbeck. That's 4 percent of its 8,000-person state workforce. (Or, for we Strib-obsessed media junkies, roughly the size of the newspaper's newsroom.) As of last fall, total state med-device employment was 26,067 and rising, so this isn't enormous. The growth is continuing at smaller companies, analysts say. Still, cuts like these add to the state's

overall job-growth sluggishness. Medtronic expects total employment to grow by year's end — overseas.

The PiPress's Dave Orrick says St. Paul Public Works "blew its 2007 budget" by \$4.2 million so it'll be making \$1.33 million in cuts well into the fiscal (and pot-hole) year. Money quote from the council president: "This is a budget that is really important to us, and it's screwed up." Mayor Chris Coleman's staff members cite their own accounting, budgeting and communications mistakes. As in Minneapolis, St. Paul will reduce seal-coating, which prevents potholes, and other cuts loom.

Whoa: a legit consumer group plans to lobby for Delta's NWA acquisition, Cox News Service reports. The Consumer Federation of America (CFA) says airline conditions are so bad that the deal is no biggie and Congress should rely on stricter regulation. (CFA typically advocates regulation, and accepts support from unions and corporations.) Two "free-market consumer" groups are also lobbying for the deal.

MPR's Mark Steil reports on congressional plans to roll back federal ethanol mandates. A new congressional proposal would cut U.S. production mandates in half — presumptive GOP presidential nominee John McCain backs it.

MPR's Greta Cunningham says a Minnesota progressive think tank floats the idea of a farmland price bubble. Minnesota 2020 notes some land prices have doubled and tripled in the last six years and resembles residential real estate. State economist Tom Stinson isn't alarmed; he says farmers remember the last land-value crash, and there may be better fundamentals for the farm price rise, given world food demand. Mn2020 leaders say the state should still plan for a fall.

The PiPress's Rachel Stassen-

Berger blogs on budget-gap-closing items the governor hates: a freeze on teachers' performance pay; reduced statewide testing spending; a \$10 hike in the motor vehicle transfer fee; transfers from workers' comp funds; a hike in one welfare program budget, and elimination of a teen abstinence program. Writes Stassen-Berger: "According to one legislative staffer's calculations, the governor lists more than \$300 million worth of 'concerns' within the \$355 million worth of spending [cuts]."

On Tuesday, the idea of a state constitutional amendment forbidding transfers from the Health Care Access Fund made news. Now, AP's Brian Bakst says legislators may add two more constitutional questions: to let the Legislature call itself into special session (the gov has that power now) and establish a citizens' council to set legislative pay. The special session couldn't last more than a week, and the gov and state Supreme Court Chief Justice would appoint the pay panel.

Minnesota Monitor's Britt Robson provides one of the better overviews of recent maneuvering over the Health Care Access Fund, and why the recent plan to use \$48 million of the \$250 million surplus for health care isn't expanding access at all.

The College of St. Catherine will change its name to reflect growth, and all possibilities include "St. Catherine" and "university," the PiPress reports. That forecloses a lot of options, and the only question seems to be whether there's a "the" and an "of." But we'd like to think "Catherine's Swingin' St. Paul University" remains a possibility. The new name emerges in August and takes effect June 1, 2009.

Oil vs. ethanol: What's riskier?

CRAIG WESTOVER

The price of crude oil broke through the \$120 a barrel barrier earlier this week. In part, according to Bloomberg News, the price increase is influenced by political unrest in Nigeria, Africa's largest oil producer. Rebel attacks on an oil flow-station curtailed an unspecified amount of the country's oil output.

Instability in the oil-producing areas of the world is often cited as a major reason for creating a domestic ethanol industry by subsidizing the industry and supporting it by mandating the ethanol content of gasoline at the pump. Corn-based fuel grown right here in Minnesota, so the reasoning goes, contributes to the American security and energy independence. But other news stories this week raise questions about the absoluteness of that claim. Spring planting for Minnesota farmers is behind schedule, and delays in getting the state's corn crop in the ground can have significant negative effects on the state's corn yield and hence ethanol production.

Energy independence or weather dependent

"I believe our nation's addiction to foreign oil represents a threat to our national security, our economy, and our freedom," writes Sen. Norm Coleman on his website, parading the patriotic pitch for ethanol. "By 2025 it is estimated that nearly

75 percent of America's oil supply will be imported, much of it from volatile regions of the world dominated by tyrants."

Praise God and pass the legislative mandates and ethanol subsidies that are helping the United States achieve energy independence based on a stable source of fuel — home-grown Midwest corn. But not so fast.

A cold and soggy spring across the Midwest is keeping farmers out of the fields, reports the St. Paul Pioneer Press. Only 8 percent of Minnesota's corn crop is in the ground, compared to a normal 65 percent by the first week in May. In Minnesota, the target date to plant is April 25. Every additional day of delay reduces potential yield.

Using data from the National Corn Growers Association to justify state support for the ethanol industry, Minnesota Department of Agriculture website claims, "an increase of just two bushels per acre results in an additional 150 million bushels of corn, which can produce 420 million gallons of ethanol." A bushel of corn produces about 2.8 gallons of ethanol. Conversely, then, a reduction of just two bushels per acre due to late planting or adverse weather conditions would reduce ethanol output by 420 million gallons.

A University of Minnesota Extension Service report found that while bushel per acre yields continue to rise in Minnesota, "weather remains the major limiting factor in determin-

ing corn yield." In low-yield years, early frost, dry or dry hot weather and late planting and cold wet weather produced deviations from the upward trend lines for corn yields between 20 to 50 percent measured in bushels per acre. Based on an output of 160 bushels per acre (the 2005 yield cited by the study), weather could reduce corn yields between 32 and 80 bushels per acre. That's a lot of ethanol.

It's also a lot of math and a lot of assumptions, but the analogy is simple: weather is to ethanol supply as political unrest is to oil supply — perhaps even more so.

Weighing the risks

Speaking at a Chicago City Seminar in Nov. 2007, Cato Institute senior fellow Jerry Taylor discounted the notion that because corn is grown right here in the United States and oil is harvested in areas of the world where instability, terrorism or simple antipathy to the United States can dramatically affect supply, ethanol supply is more dependable than oil supply.

The assumption of dependable supply made by ethanol supporters is not supported by data, according to Taylor. From 1960 to 2005, a period which includes the 1970s oil embargo by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the recent worldwide growth in demand for oil, corn production was twice as

variable as oil imports. It was riskier to depend on corn than on oil imports for consuming needs.

Looking at the historical record, Taylor points out that oil prices go through boom and bust periods and that this particular boom looks a lot like the 1973-1986 price explosion — "actually, almost eerily so looking just at price movement and duration up to this point," he wrote in an email. "Hence, current oil market behavior is not unprecedented."

"Oil markets may indeed become more volatile over time," he adds. "But they would have to become twice as volatile in absolute terms to match the historical volatility of corn markets. Because it doesn't always rain the optimal amount, the sun doesn't shine the optimal amount, corn yield can vary considerably."

Taylor could have added a cold soggy spring and late planting to that weather litany. According to the USDA, the current spring planting situation in Minnesota is not unprecedented. Similar conditions in 2001 produced the lowest yields in a decade.

"Bottom line," says Taylor, "if you move from oil to ethanol you trade off a set of geopolitical risks for a set of natural risks that are at least twice as great as geographical risks you left." As a source of energy, data reveals "corn is even more risky than oil."

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Joel Kramer, CEO and editor

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The Washington Post reported that “due to Obama’s tremendous strength among black voters in North Carolina, he carried nearly every major demographic category as well. Obama won among men 57 percent to 39 percent over Clinton; he won among women, 54 percent to 42 percent.”

Obama’s delegate count brought him closer to the nomination — 1,840.5 to 1,684 for Clinton in The Associated Press count, out of 2,025 needed to win the nomination.

Obama also enjoys a popular vote margin of roughly 500,000.

So Obama continues to lead in all categories: delegates, popular vote and elections. And the margins will increase after Tuesday, meaning it will be difficult, if not impossible, for Clinton to overtake him. And it will be increasingly difficult for uncommitted superdelegates to deny him the nomination, many analysts suggested last night on the cable network talkathons. But Clinton has shown no signs of being willing to drop out.

Clinton emphasized populist themes during recent weeks, The Times reported, “yet she was unable to build her base of support substantially beyond the white, working-class voters who had sustained her for the last month — and that will not be lost on the super delegates, the elected Democrats and party leaders who will ultimately decide this fight.”

Obama’s controversial former pastor, The Rev. Jeremiah Wright, played a role in the election in both states, CBS reported, with half saying it was important in their vote and half saying it was not.

‘Defining moment in history’

In an impassioned speech to supporters last night in Raleigh, N.C., Obama, shaking off several weeks of campaign turmoil, talked as though he would be the eventual nominee.

“We stand less than 200 del-



REUTERS

Sen. Hillary Clinton addresses her North Carolina and Indiana primary election night rally in Indianapolis.

egates away from securing the Democratic nomination for president of the United States,” he said. “But ultimately, this race is not about Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama or John McCain... because we all agree that at this defining moment in history -- a moment when we’re facing two wars, an economy in turmoil, a planet in peril -- we can’t afford to give John McCain the chance to serve out George Bush’s third term,” Obama said. “We need change in America.”

Clinton, flanked by the former president and her daughter, Chelsea, did not declare victory in Indiana in a speech late last night, but came close.

“Not too long ago my opponent made a prediction; he said I would probably win Pennsylvania. He would probably win in North Carolina. And Indiana would be a tiebreaker,” she said. “Well, we’ve broken the tie, and thanks to you it’s full speed on to

the White House.” But Clinton also assured her supporters and the television audience that she would work for the party nominee in the fall.

Whoever ultimately wins the nomination will have a good deal of work to do to woo back the other candidate’s supporters, according to exit polls.

CNN reported that “half of Clinton’s supporters in Indiana would not vote for Obama in a general election match up with Sen. John McCain... A third of Clinton voters said they would pick McCain over Obama, while 17 percent said they would not vote at all. Forty-eight percent of Clinton supporters said they would back Obama in November. Obama got even less support from Clinton backers in North Carolina where 45 percent of Clinton supporters said they would vote for him over McCain. Thirty-eight percent of Clinton supporters said they would vote

for McCain while 12 percent said they would not vote.

“Obama voters appear to be more willing to support Clinton in November. In Indiana, 59 percent of Obama backers said they’d vote for Clinton, and 70 percent of Obama backers in North Carolina said they’d vote for her against McCain.”

Poll experts point out that those numbers may change significantly by the general election, but they still present challenges for the eventual Democratic nominee, particularly Obama.

Doug Stone is director of College Relations at Macalester College in St. Paul and a former reporter for the Minneapolis Tribune and assistant news director at WCCO-TV. The views in this article are not those of Macalester College.

Western medicine meets the meditative tradition

By PAUL SCOTT

ROCHESTER — The press that followed a recent visit by the Dalai Lama to the Mayo Clinic focused primarily on the spiritual leader's comments about the Chinese crackdown on protest in Tibet. It isn't hard to imagine why. The meeting's contentious international backdrop — a conflict underscored by the sidewalk appearance of a strangely polished crew of 50 or so pro-Chinese demonstrators mounting a lonely crusade to tarnish the cause of Tibetan autonomy — was an easier tale to tell than the less easily digested topic of the daylong event itself.

The oversight was unfortunate, because the case being made during the April 16 colloquium titled "Investigating the Mind-Body Connection: The Science and Clinical Applications of Meditation," seems far more destabilizing than the political movement in Tibet.

It's one thing to ponder the irony of a professional-seeming protest in defense of a government that does not allow protest. It's quite another thing to witness the brain trust behind the brand more associated with Western medicine than any other giving forum to the emerging science of mindfulness training, acceptance, positive thinking and compassion. The first cause is about political change. The second is cosmological.

Thanks to the Dalai Lama's public embrace of science, and his personal embrace of Mayo Clinic Rochester for his health care, the clinic had been able to team up with the leader's Boulder, CO-based Mind & Life Institute to organize an elite gathering of mind-body science practitioners. They ranged from best-selling emotions sciences author Daniel Goleman to the University of Wisconsin neuro-imaging scientist Richard Davidson and University of Massachusetts molecular biologist-turned-mindfulness-training scientist Jon Kabat-Zinn and others.

The Buddhist meditative tradition

The Dalai Lama's prescription is that of the Buddhist meditative tradition: selecting and focusing on positive mental states such as compassion, gratitude and joy, while challenging negative mental states such as anger, jealousy, anxiety and a distracted state of being. In practice this means daily meditative practice intent on clearing mental clutter and developing more clarity of attention and moment by moment awareness.

The Dalai Lama has long believed that so-called mindfulness meditation has beneficial effects on human health and well-being, and thanks to research conducted by Davidson and others, we now know that the brain and body do indeed change for the better as a result of such practice, and through measurable physiological pathways more complex than had previously been imagined.

Researchers have known for years, for example, that a bilateral brain region known as the prefrontal cortex, or PFC, is involved in developing responses to emotionally laden thoughts, and that the way we respond to the events and thoughts in our lives is often determined by whether the brain draws on the right side of our PFC or its left. Operating below the level of awareness, the left side of the prefrontal cortex responds to problems with an eye toward punishments and avenues of withdrawal, while the right side processes thoughts which are generally positive and tuned to rewards. Damage the left prefrontal cortex and depression increases; those who tend to preferentially use the left side of their prefrontal cortex tend to get over problems faster than do those who process emotion-laden thoughts from the right. Significant for the discussion of physical health, those who preferentially use the left prefrontal cortex show lower baseline levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

Stress chemicals like cortisol have been shown to be advantageous when experienced in brief windows, but research suggests that a chronic elevation of corti-

sol is related to a veritable kitchen sink of medical and cognitive problems — including poor immune function; poor response to vaccines; longer healing times for injuries; more cavities, allergies and asthma; higher depositions of abdominal fat (a risk factor for cancer); and greater difficulty forming and recalling memories.

The dangers of chronic frustration

A separate area of research has linked chronic frustration with disruption of your heart-rate variability, which, sustained over time, the body begins to recognize as its baseline state, bringing about an inhibition of the vital bodily calming mechanism that is your parasympathetic nervous system. Feel frustrated long enough and your body ceases to calm itself.

By wiring EEG sensors to the heads of Buddhist monks and those attempting to meditate for the first time, then examining brain activity as expressed on functional MRI images, Davidson and Kabat-Zinn have learned that meditation employs the left prefrontal cortex — some monks he has studied have greater left prefrontal orientation than ever previously observed — and that over time, meditative practice can change the orientation from the right to the left of those who take up the activity. Brain circuitry is not fixed, in other words. To the contrary, said Davidson during a research-based session at Mayo, "the brain is the organ that is built to change in response to training. Happiness, compassion, and clarity of attention are the product of skills, and these skills can be enhanced through mental training."

After hearing the case that meditative mental training can help people stay healthier and recover more quickly from illness, the Mayo audience of 350 or so faculty and staff entered more culturally problematic territory — subject matter that seemed to be talked around as much as it was examined. In short, while medicine is beginning to take seriously the notion that the cultivation of compassion and mindfulness is beneficial for physical health,

medicine as practiced today is often antithetical to the very mindfulness and spiritual "presentness" sought after in meditative practice.

An East-West paradox?

The clinic may have established a "mind-body" Department of Integrative Medicine and gathered with earnest enthusiasm to hear from the top names in mind-body research, but Mayo is nothing if not the face of Western medicine in all its dichotomous cleaving of the spirit from the biology, both in culture and practice. The medical embrace of meditative compassion would seem to face a paradox: The grueling rise to the highest levels of medical specialization does not appear conducive to regular breaks for contemplative meditative practice, nor does the culture of omnipotence, authority and spirit of conquest within medical training seem a smooth fit for the sense of acceptance embodied in Buddhism.

The bad news came in large part from Roshi Joan Halifax, a Zen priest and medical anthropologist whose remarks suggested that embracing the Buddhist prescription will likely require more than stocking the patient information center with brochures on the value of meditation. For example, the Dalai Lama's thoughts on death are clear: "I think the most important thing," according to a Web collection of his sayings, "is to try and do our best to ensure that dying person may depart quietly, with serenity and in a peace." Caregivers of those at the end of life experience high rates of burnout, said Halifax, due to the "moral stress" brought on by the damage done to this peace by conflicting agendas of medicine in the face of death.

Read the complete story at www.minnpost.com.

Paul Scott is a freelance writer based in Rochester.

COMMUNITY VOICES

Of legislators and subsidies: When will they ever learn?

By PHIL KRINKIE

On Tuesday, April 22, in front of a House Taxes Committee hearing packed with onlookers, lobbyists and a clutch of the ever-available “down-on-their-luck construction workers,” legislators listened to yet another proposal to flush taxpayer money down the Mall of America’s “Phase II” development toilet. This year’s version of the legislation calls for the diversion of \$4.5 million per year from a pool of property tax dollars to fund a \$204 million parking ramp. Though the parking ramp will only make up 11 percent of the total proposed expansion, supporters of the plan are threatening that without the subsidy the project won’t move forward.

Just three days later in the House Commerce and Labor Committee, another set of legislators heard about the possible effects that the Northwest/Delta Airlines merger could have on local jobs and the repayment of a \$215 million loan issued by the Metropolitan Airports Commission to Northwest. Maybe if the legislators in the Taxes Committee could have heard what Northwest was tell-

ing their colleagues a few days later — after years of threats, subsidies, threats and more subsidies — Mall of America supporters would have found their plan about as well received as another April snowfall.

To better understand what can happen when state lawmakers dole out public dollars to private businesses, let’s take a walk down memory lane.

In 1991, Northwest Airlines came knocking at the Capitol’s door looking for a big bailout. It claimed that if it didn’t get help it would consider moving its headquarters and other operations to another state. Fearing the saber rattling of then Chairman Al Checchi, who had in 1989 helped organize a \$3.65 billion leveraged buyout of Northwest, the Legislature responded. Checchi and his partner, Gary Wilson, were able to persuade the Legislature and Gov. Arne Carlson to provide the airline with an \$837 million package of state and local bonds, subsidies and tax credits.

Another year, another threat

One year later, in the midst of an industry-wide downturn and with some of the remaining costs of the leveraged buyout

still not resolved, Northwest threatened to file for bankruptcy unless it was given wage concessions from employees. Eight-hundred million dollars later, the airline was able to remain on its feet.

As part of the 1991 bailout package Northwest promised, in addition to other conditions, to create 2,000 new jobs in Northeastern Minnesota. But, as “public-private partnerships” tend to do, once Northwest got its money and realized the promises it made looked much better on paper, a renegotiated deal dropped the number of jobs to 950. So just as Murray woke up every morning to the same verse of “I Got You, Babe” in the movie “Groundhog Day,” another corporate welfare supplicant — this time the Mall of America — is singing an eerily similar tune, “I Got Jobs for You, Minnesota.”

Another major aspect of the 1991 bailout was the provision that Northwest must keep its headquarters in Minnesota until the loan is repaid. But at the April 25 Commerce Committee hearing, a Northwest spokesman stated that under the Northwest/Delta merger the headquarters for the new airline

would remain in Atlanta, where Delta is based. The result of Northwest closing its headquarters in the Twin Cities will be the loss of hundreds of more jobs. Yet, during the tenure of Checchi and Wilson at Northwest from 1989 to 1997, it is estimated that their initial investment of \$40 million returned a \$1 billion windfall for the former chairmen (with the help of Minnesota taxpayers).

While there are likely several more chapters to be written in the Northwest saga, the reality is that the state should never have handed out hundreds of millions in taxpayer subsidies to Northwest in the first place. Today’s members of the Legislature should heed the lessons learned from the Northwest experience and realize that giving public money to private business can only benefit one side. What are the folks who own the Mall of America going to do if they don’t get their state subsidy — build Phase II in Iowa?

Phil Krinkie, a former chairman of the House Taxes Committee, is president of the Taxpayers League of Minnesota.

To better understand what can happen when state lawmakers dole out public dollars to private businesses, let’s take a walk down memory lane. In 1991, Northwest Airlines came knocking at the Capitol’s door looking for a big bailout. It claimed that if it didn’t get help it would consider moving its headquarters and other operations to another state.

Want to add your voice?

If you’re interested in joining the discussion by writing a Community Voices article, email Susan Albright at salbright@minnpost.com.