



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

ADVOCATING FOR MINNESOTA'S HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

By Ryan Hamilton • Mar 24, 2026

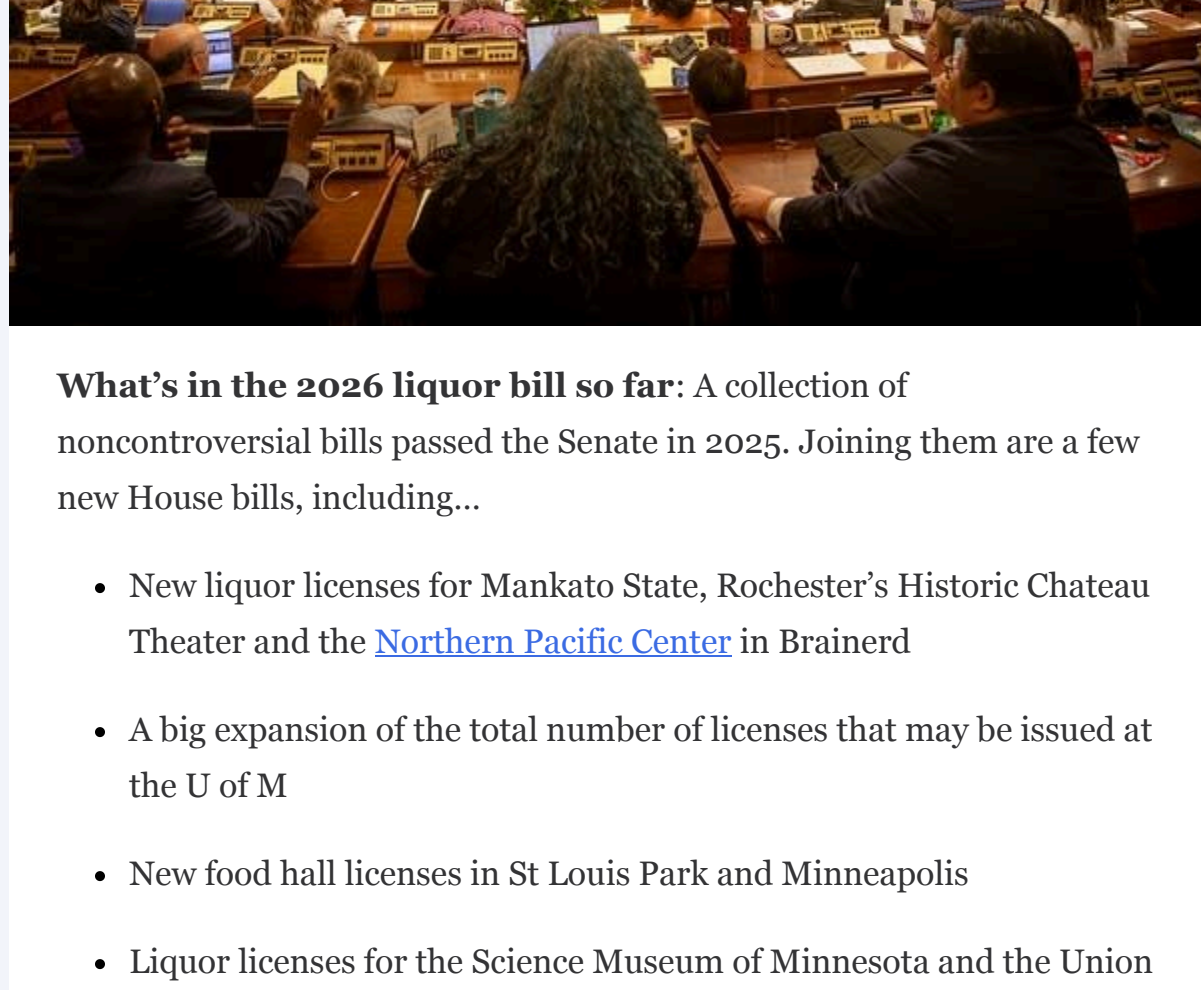
Smart Brevity® count: 3 mins...809 words

Welcome back. In today's GR Update, we go over last week's key advancements of our legislative priorities, preview this week's work for the legislature's first and second deadline on March 27, and encourage members with elected officials on the House Tax Committee to push for tax abatement.

- **Reminder:** Register for this year's [Day at the Capitol on April 8](#). We have a limited number of spots available, and we anticipate selling out very soon.

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House Update: 2026 Liquor Bill Moves Past Commerce Committee



What's in the 2026 liquor bill so far: A collection of noncontroversial bills passed the Senate in 2025. Joining them are a few new House bills, including...

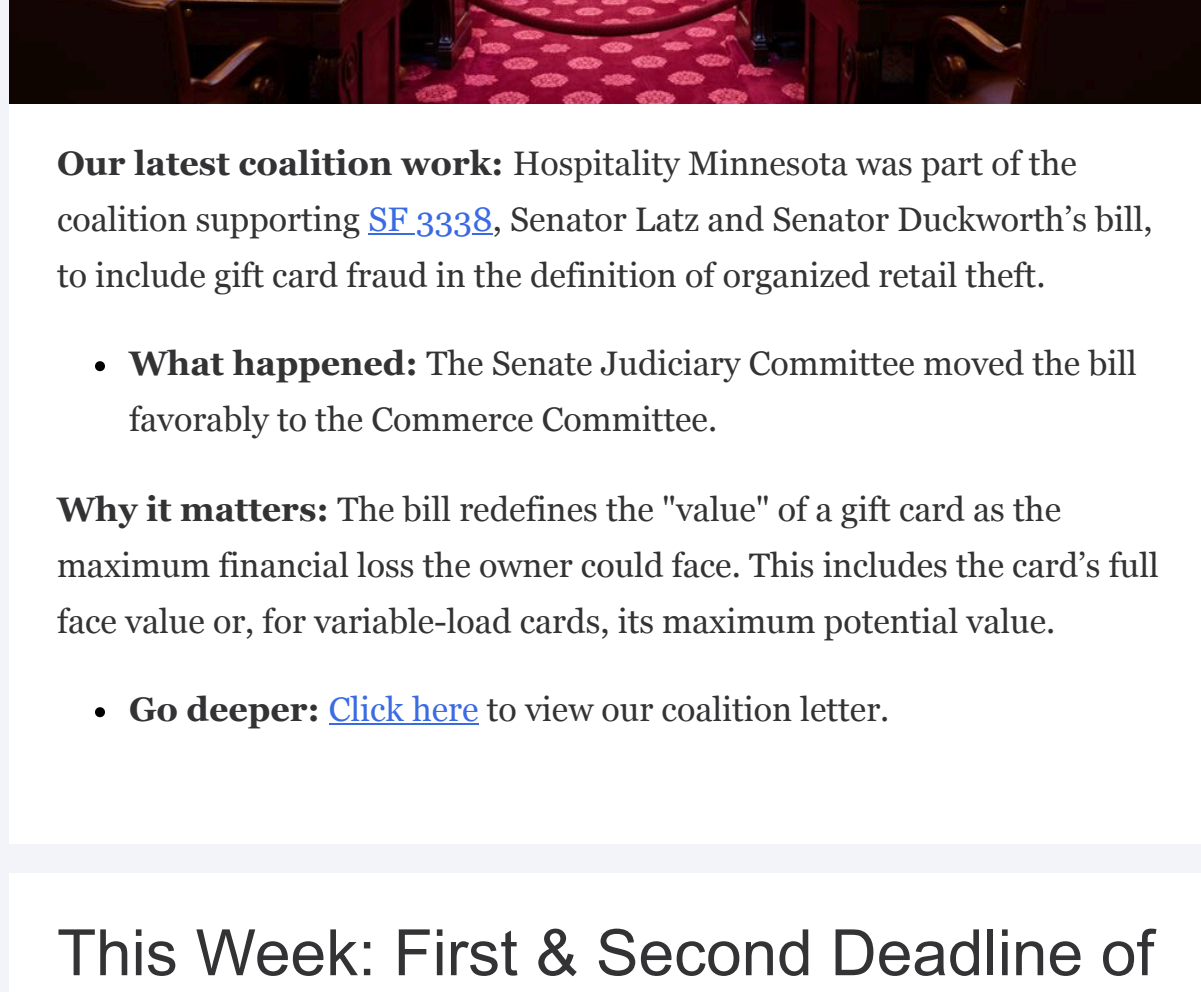
- New liquor licenses for Mankato State, Rochester's Historic Chateau Theater and the [Northern Pacific Center](#) in Brainerd
- A big expansion of the total number of licenses that may be issued at the U of M
- New food hall licenses in St Louis Park and Minneapolis
- Liquor licenses for the Science Museum of Minnesota and the Union Depot
- Authorization for municipalities to issue temporary on-sale intoxicating liquor licenses to food trucks, for sales at certain festivals and events
- Rep. Nadeau's "[Grandparents Happy Hour](#)" bill

- **Resort members:** Of particular note is the inclusion of [Rep. Matt Bliss' bill](#) to allow a county board to issue seasonal on-sale licenses to resorts. In addition, [the bill](#) would allow a county to issue an unlimited number of these licenses.

What the House Commerce Committee left out of the liquor bill:

- Social Districts
- Work authorization for 17-year-old servers/bartenders

Senate Update: Coalition Advances Gift Card Fraud Inclusion in Organized Retail Theft



Our latest coalition work: Hospitality Minnesota was part of the coalition supporting [SF 3338](#), Senator Latz and Senator Duckworth's bill, to include gift card fraud in the definition of organized retail theft.

- **What happened:** The Senate Judiciary Committee moved the bill favorably to the Commerce Committee.

Why it matters: The bill redefines the "value" of a gift card as the maximum financial loss the owner could face. This includes the card's full face value or, for variable-load cards, its maximum potential value.

- **Go deeper:** [Click here](#) to view our coalition letter.

This Week: First & Second Deadline of the 2026 Legislative Session

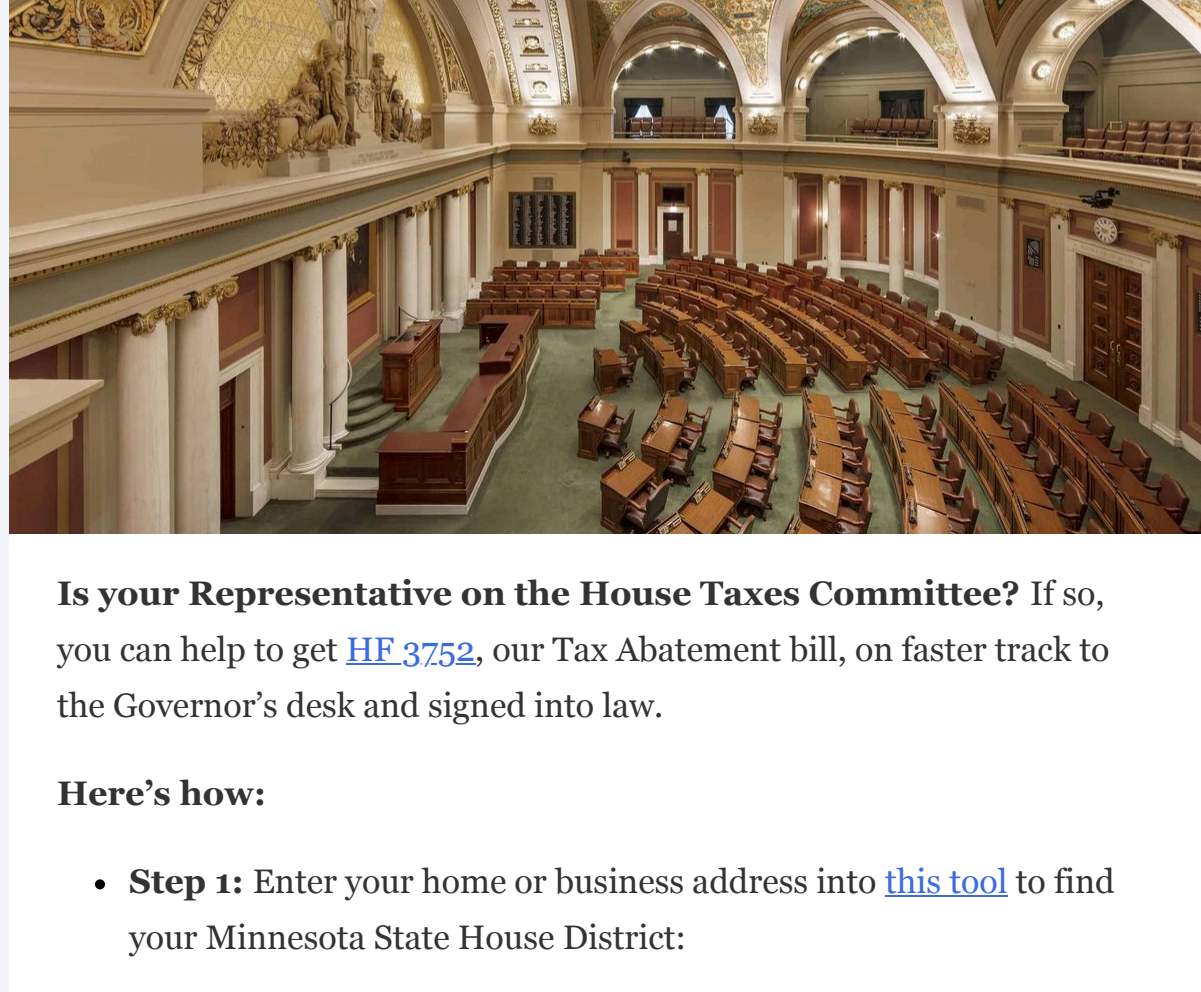


Expect to see legislators doing overtime: Committees are expected to work long hours to finish up before the legislature goes on break for Easter and Passover.

- **Why the long hours?** The Legislature set the first and second committee deadlines for the 2026 session to conclude at 5 p.m. on Friday, March 27, 2026.

What's next: Following the deadline, the legislature shifts its focus from individual bill hearings to passing large "omnibus bills", combining multiple concepts into unified legislation for easier passage closer to the end of session.

Upcoming Hearing: Decoupling Tax Abatement from Liquor Law Posting Penalties



Stay informed: [SF 4253](#), Hospitality Minnesota's technical bill to decouple tax abatements from liquor posting penalties (authored by Senators Putman and Draheim), is [scheduled for a hearing on Thursday morning, March 26](#) in the Senate Taxes Committee.

Call to Action: Tax Abatement Bill



Is your Representative on the House Taxes Committee? If so, you can help to get [HF 3752](#), our Tax Abatement bill, on faster track to the Governor's desk and signed into law.

Here's how:

- **Step 1:** Enter your home or business address into [this tool](#) to find your Minnesota State House District:
 - If you live or have a business located in House District 62A, 32B, 59B, 50B, 43B, 66B, 51A, 56B, 08B, 67A, 25B, or 46B then you are represented by a legislator that sits on the House Taxes Committee.
- **Step 2:** Reach out to your elected official to request/encourage them to "support a motion to move [HF 3752](#) to the General Register for immediate consideration and passage by the full House of Representatives".

Register Today for Hospitality Minnesota's 2026 Day at the Capitol



Calling all advocates: A limited number of spots remain to join hospitality leaders from across the state for [Hospitality Day at the Capitol on April 8, 2026 at the Minnesota State Capitol](#).

What to Expect:

- **Briefing Session:** Learn about current legislative priorities and how to effectively share your story with lawmakers.
- **Meetings with Legislators:** Engage in meaningful conversations with elected officials who shape policies affecting your business and community.
- **Networking Lunch:** Connect with industry professionals and legislative leaders while discussing shared industry goals.

The bottom line: Policy gets made with or without us. These are your chances to make sure it's *with* us.

[Register Now!](#)

As Session Continues, You Can Count On Us

Stay tuned: Hospitality Minnesota will continue monitoring bill introductions, committee hearings, and legislative negotiations as the session progresses.

- **Check back for future updates.** Additional communications will be provided as legislation continues moving through the committee process.

Thank you reading! Check out past [GR Updates](#) here.

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