Senator Bobby Joe Champion
Minnesota Senate President
Minnesota Senate Building 3401
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senate
State of Minnesota

January 26, 2026

To: Senate Majority Leader Erin Murphy
Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson
Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Sven Lindquist
Secretary of the Senate Tom Bottern

CC: Captain Eric Roeske, Minnesota State Patrol
Colonel Christina Bogojevic, Minnesota State Patrol
Commissioner Bob Jacobson, Department of Public Safety

Notice

Pursuant to Article 4, section 25 of the Minnesota Constitution,[1] Senate Rule 14.3,[2] and Mason's Manual section 805.1, 805.2, and 805.5,[3] in my capacity as the Senate President, I am hereby implementing the following protocols for the 2026 regular legislative session:

1. Requiring the use of a full body security scanner for all members of the public entering the Senate gallery; and
2. Prohibiting the carrying of firearms or other dangerous weapons as defined by Minn. Stat. 609.02, subd. 6, by members of the public in the Senate gallery, including for those who have a permit under Minn. Stat. § 624.714. This prohibition does not apply to licensed peace officers or Senate Sergeants-at Arms when they are performing official duties.

These protocols will be implemented beginning on February 17, 2026, and will be in effect until the Senate adjourns the session sine die. These protocols will also be implemented for the duration of any special legislative sessions during the 2026 calendar year. The scanners will be operational on days when the Senate conducts floor sessions, but operation of the scanners may be suspended for portions of the day at the direction of the Senate President.

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[1] Minnesota Constitution, Article 4, section 25, "Sec. 25. Disorderly conduct. During a session each house may punish by imprisonment for not more than 24 hours any person not a member who is guilty of any disorderly or contemptuous behavior in its presence."

[2] Senate Rule 14.3, "The President must preserve order and decorum, may speak on points of order in preference to members, and must also decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Senate by a member."

[3] Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, 2020 Edition, Section 805:
"1. A state legislative body possesses inherent powers of self-protection.
2. An official charged with responsibility of presiding over a legislative body has the discretion or implied authority to maintain the order and dignity becoming to that body.
...
5. A legislative body has the right to the regulate its own halls."

Rationale

The political violence and mass shootings in recent months have been deeply troubling. These atrocities have occurred with regularity close to home and across the country. Along with these heinous acts, there has also been an increase in credible threats leveled at politicians locally and nationally.

This actual and threatened political violence creates an atmosphere that feels chaotic and unsafe for the very people who are showing up at the Capitol complex to do the jobs they were sent here to do – to represent the people of their districts.

It is incumbent on the Senate to take steps to protect our legislators and staff while they perform their core function – debating and passing bills on the Senate floor.
The Senate gallery is unique in that it is accessible by the public and overlooks the Senate floor where all 67 legislators and more than a dozen staff may be present at any time during the floor debate of the session. In this instance, a targeted ban of firearms and other dangerous weapons, and use of full body security scanners to enforce the ban will make a great difference in the safety of members and staff doing their work.

The Second Amendment right to bear arms is not an unlimited right. *D.C. v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570, 626 (2008). In the 2008 U.S. Supreme Court opinion *D.C. v. Heller,* the Court acknowledged the validity of laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as government buildings. *Id.* In the more recent 2022 U.S. Supreme Court opinion of *New York State Rifle & Pistol Assn., Inc. v. Bruen,* the Supreme Court recognized that areas in which constitutionally protected activities occur, such as courthouses and legislative assemblies, are quintessential examples of sensitive places. *See New York State Rifle & Pistol Assn., Inc. v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. 1, 30 (2022). *Bruen*'s language expressly acknowledges "legislative assemblies" are sensitive places where guns may be restricted.

Given the longstanding tradition and settled jurisprudence that permit banning firearms in sensitive places, such as government buildings and legislative assemblies, the Senate is permitted to ban firearms in the Senate gallery.

Procedure

A full body security scanner will be installed on 3rd floor of the Capitol, outside of the southwest corridor that leads to the Senate gallery. In order to enter the Senate gallery while the scanner is in use, a member of the public must pass through security at this location. Members of the public will not be permitted to enter the Senate gallery through any other entrance.