architects and engineers. "It was never our intent" to leave the ability to bring claims open-ended, he said. The bill would modify the existing two-year period in which a claim may be made for contribution or indemnity related to an improvement to real property to no more than 14 years after substantial completion of the construction. The bill specifies that the claims covered under this limitation include those related to statutory new home and home improvement warranties. Gov. Mark Dayton signed the bill into law April 24.

Legislation That Did Not Pass

As part of debate on the Omnibus Transportation Policy Bill on the Senate Floor, senators appeared ready to pass an increase in the speed limit on most highways in the state that are posted at 55 miles per hour. There was also a move to increase the speed on what is often jokingly referred to the "St. Paul Practice Highway" a stretch of Interstate 35E in St. Paul that has a relatively low posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour. The provision to increase the speed limit on I-35E drew many protests from lawmakers who represent that area who pointed out that a special judicial consent decree prohibited any entity— including the Minnesota Legislature—from increasing the speed on that stretch. But Sen. Dave Senjem (R-Rochester) came up with what many considered a novel compromise, by proposing that lawmakers expand the so-called Dimler Amendment to potential violators who get ticketed on I-35E. The Dimler Amendment forbids the Department of Public Safety from recording speeding violations on highways as long as the violator is not exceeding the posted speed limit by more than nine miles per hour. The Insurance Federation has long opposed expansion of this amendment because it interferes with proper insurance underwriting. The Senate adopted the provision and sent the bill to the House, which did not concur with the Senate's version of the bill, prompting a conference committee to work out the differences. When the conference committee report emerged, both the increased speed limits and the expansion of the Dimler Amendment did not survive the final cut of the bill, which eventually passed and was signed into law.

Autism and Workers' Comp Changes Passed And LTCI Tax Credits Were Saved

"In the airline industry, it would have been called a 'near-miss'—a potentially life life-changing event that was narrowly avoided, and known about by only by a few people," says Craig Roers of Newman Long term Care. He was describing a bill in the past legislative session that attempted to find new revenue for the state by, among other things, repealing the Minnesota LTCI Tax Credit. Proponents of this move sought to gain over $8 million a year by eliminating this incentive. Roers said that once the state Own Your Own Future Advisory Panel, charged with finding solutions to the state's long-term care problem, heard of the bill it successfully started a lobbying campaign to derail it. The result was that the tax credit remains part of Minnesota law. "Over 30 states offer some kind of incentive to purchase LTCI, whether by allowing a state deduction or a tax credit," Roers explained. "Minnesota is one of only nine that offer a tax credit. . . 57,000 Minnesotans claimed this credit in the past year and some of them have enjoyed this reward for the past 14 years."

A controversial bill that would have placed a $5 surcharge on auto and homeowners' premiums to help pay for underfunded police and firefighters' pension was not passed.

A proposal by plaintiff attorneys to increase income and survivor weekly wage loss under no-fault from $250 to $500 a week as well as raise the funeral benefit from $2,000 to $3,000, plus prohibit the aggregation of claims to exceed the $10,000 cap for arbitration, passed the House but not the Senate.

House File 1030 supported by Ramsey County attorney John Choi to return a source of funds generated by a 50-cent per-auto-policy-charge previously authorized to fight auto theft but diverted to the state's general fund by budget-stressed legislators did not pass. The bill would have eliminated the $1.3 million annual transfer to the general fund. An unrelated provision to allow the Commerce Commissioner to transfer certain unallocated money left in the Auto Theft Prevention Fund to the Insurance Fraud Prevention account did pass as part of a separate Commerce Department bill.

A bill to ban credit score in setting insurance rates and renewals died in committee but it will be alive in the 2014 session. ■