

(AP) Minnesota lawmakers are off and running in the 2012 legislative session. The state House and Senate convened at noon Tuesday for short sessions. They were limited to ceremonial and organizational business. Gov. Mark Dayton is hosting a reception for lawmakers and their families later in the afternoon. Dayton says a few of his top legislative priorities for the year are legislation to boost jobs and lower the state unemployment rate, and a Vikings stadium bill. While the Senate opened with lawmakers paying tribute to bipartisanship, Republicans and Democrats in that chamber quickly clashed over a majority Republican move to cut the staff budget for Democrats. Lawmakers were also greeted in the Capitol rotunda by several hundred chanting protesters from the Occupy Wall Street movement.