



## Minnesota lawmaker wants to tax facelifts and Botox injections

By Martiga Logo

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Getting the perfect lips or nose under your parka hood might cost you extra if a new bill passes in the Legislature.

State Rep. Phyllis Kahn is pushing to extend Minnesota's 6.5 percent sales tax to cosmetic surgery and appearance-enhancing procedures including chemical skin peels, laser hair removal, cosmetic injections and spider vein treatments.

Anybody who has the money for plastic surgery can afford to pay the tax, said Kahn, a Minneapolis Democrat.

"There aren't a lot of homeless people and there aren't a lot of people who don't have enough money for food who are getting optional cosmetic surgery," she said.

New Jersey is the only state that taxes cosmetic surgery, collecting an estimated \$11 million this year. But plastic surgery taxes have caught the attention of lawmakers in Texas, Illinois and Washington in recent years as a potential new source of revenue.

Kahn said her proposal would raise about \$7 million a year.

Most of that money would come from the bank accounts of hardworking women, said Dr. Richard D'Amico, president-elect of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons near Chicago. He said 90 percent of plastic surgery patients are female, with annual incomes averaging about \$60,000.

"It hurts working women who save up their money and work hard and try to do something for themselves once in a while," he said.

D'Amico practices in Englewood, N.J., where his patients have had to pay the 6 percent state sales tax on their operations since 2004. New Jersey lawmakers voted to repeal the tax last year but Gov. Jon Corzine vetoed that effort in January, leaving the tax in place.

The Minnesota proposal got its first hearing before a House tax panel on Monday. No vote was taken but the legislation might become part of a larger tax bill later this legislative session.

Kahn's bill excludes medically necessary procedures, such as facial reconstruction after an accident or burns. It also wouldn't apply to laser eye surgery or braces to correct bite problems.