

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

May 30, 2007

The Honorable Representative Margaret Kelliher
Speaker of the House
Minnesota House of Representatives
463 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Statement of Item Veto, Chapter 146, House File 2245

Dear Representative Kelliher:

I have reluctantly signed Chapter 146, House File 2245 and deposited it in the Office of the Secretary of State. This K-12 education bill failed to provide the level of general formula funding I proposed. It is also devoid of any real educational reform or accountability initiatives. Worse yet, the bill actually steps backward from the reform efforts from prior years.

The bill was signed with the exception of the following item vetoes:

1. Page 20, lines 20.11-20.14: A \$75,000 appropriation in FY 2008 in Chapter 146, Article 1, Section 24 to hire an independent contractor to assist the education finance task force authorized in the bill. The Minnesota Department of Education, House and Senate staff is available to assist the task force, thus making this appropriation unnecessary and duplicative. This task force will be the third such effort in the last four years. The need for another such task force is questionable. More troubling is the legislature's decision to have the task force consist of nearly all legislators with no members being appointed by the Governor.
2. Page 62, lines 62.4-62.9: A \$200,000 appropriation in FY 2008 and \$200,000 in FY 2009 in Chapter 146, Article 2, Section 44, subd. 1 for the Independent Office of Educational Accountability. This appropriation and the duties for the Office of Educational Accountability duplicates the services and duties provided by the Minnesota Department of Education,

numerous stakeholder groups and various working groups already in progress through the P-16 Partnership and higher education institutions. Creation and funding of yet another entity to duplicate these services is not an efficient use of state resources.

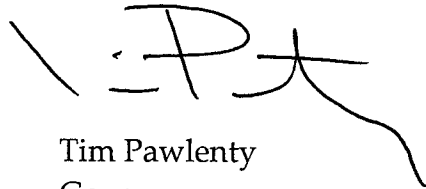
3. Page 67, lines 67.18-67.32: A \$250,000 appropriation in FY 2008 and \$250,000 in FY 2009 in Chapter 146, Article 2, Section 46 to pay teachers for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. I am strongly supportive of meaningful professional development. However, this significant appropriation would only serve a limited number of teachers. Recent studies, including one conducted by professors at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Florida State University, also raise serious questions about the cost-effectiveness of this particular program. To be meaningful, teacher professional development programs should be assessed as to their effect on student achievement. If individual school districts determine that this certification is effective, the school districts can pay for participation in the program or grant additional compensation for obtaining this certification.

In addition, the appropriation and the language creating the grant program is problematic and confusing. Rather than providing incentives for teachers to pursue certification, the majority of the appropriation is for "rewards" to teachers who already completed the program. In addition, the "reward" is mandated for a specific amount which actually *exceeds* the cost of the program. The funds are also required to be paid to individual teachers without consideration as to whether the teacher personally paid the costs of the program or whether additional compensation benefits cover the cost of the program. Finally, there appears to be a drafting error in language of the appropriation. The appropriation provides set amounts of funding for specific grants set forth in Chapter 144, Article 2, Section 37, Subd. 4. However, no funds were appropriated for the \$3,000 grants mandated by Art. 2, Section 37, Subdivision 4(b). To ensure that this item veto removes all of the state funding authorized for this grant program, I am also exercising an item veto on Page 56 lines 21 through 23.

4. Page 111, lines 111.20-111.28: A \$4.5 million appropriation in Chapter 146, Article 6, Section 3, subd. 6 for the merger of the Hennepin County and

Minneapolis library systems. I recently signed Chapter 121 into law which permitted the county and city to pursue the library merger. During the legislative process, the interested parties represented that the library merger had no fiscal impact on the state and that the merger was fiscally prudent. If state funding was necessary for the proposed library merger, the requested funding needed to be part of Chapter 121 and included in the legislative discussion relating to Chapter 121 -- not buried in the omnibus education funding bill. It is unclear whether Chapter 121 would have received the approval by the legislature or my approval if it been represented that the merger had a state or local fiscal impact of \$4.5 million. The merger decision is a local decision between the Hennepin County Board and Minneapolis City Council. Those entities should carefully consider the fiscal benefits and impacts of their planned merger.

Sincerely,



Tim Pawlenty
Governor

cc: Senator James Metzen, President of the Senate
Senator Lawrence J. Pogemiller, Majority Leader
Senator David Senjem, Minority Leader
Senator Tarryl Clark
Representative Marty Seifert, Minority Leader
Representative Mindy Greiling
Mr. Patrick E. Flahaven, Secretary of the Senate
Mr. Al Mathiowetz, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives
Mr. Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State