

April 9, 1998

The Honorable Allan H. Spear
President of the Senate

Dear President Spear:

I have vetoed and am returning Chapter 370, Senate File Number 2118, a bill which would establish an absentee voting pilot project in the City of Minneapolis.

Late last month I vetoed legislation that would have continued the Ramsey County absentee ballot pilot project, which had been in existence since 1991. Notwithstanding the valid concerns raised by many in the legislature, my concern with that project -- as with this one -- was the need for its continuation. Ample information has been accumulated about the merits of an open ballot system. What do we hope to learn from the Minneapolis project that was not demonstrated in Ramsey County? We know what the benefits and drawbacks of an open ballot system are -- if it is a good idea then take it statewide.

Changes to election law -- even if limited to a city, county or legislative district -- are too important to be wholly one-sided and laced with partisanship. I cannot support changes to our election laws when not a single Republican in the House, and relatively few in the Senate, supported the bill. This position is consistent with those taken on other bills vetoed this year.

Increasing voter turnout, especially in our large cities, is an admirable goal; but simplifying the process is only a very small part of the solution. Issues and candidates move people to vote. I suggest we focus on those critical parts to move the citizens of Minneapolis to the polls.

Warmest regards,
Arne H. Carlson, Governor

Mr. Moe, R.D. moved that S.F. No. 2118 and the veto message thereon be laid on the table. The motion prevailed.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

Mr. President:

I have the honor to announce that the House has acceded to the request of the Senate for the appointment of a Conference Committee, consisting of 3 members of the House, on the amendments adopted by the House to the following Senate File:

S.F. No. 816: A bill for an act relating to animals; requiring court order issued on complaint of animal cruelty to require that peace officer be accompanied by veterinarian; allowing veterinarians to dock horses; modifying requirements for the care of equine animals; repealing restrictions on clipped animals; changing dog house specifications; amending Minnesota Statutes 1996, sections 343.22, subdivision 1; 343.25; 343.40, subdivision 2; and 346.38, subdivisions 4 and 5; repealing Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 343.26.

There has been appointed as such committee on the part of the House:

Winter, Peterson and Larsen.

Senate File No. 816 is herewith returned to the Senate.

Edward A. Burdick, Chief Clerk, House of Representatives

Returned April 8, 1998

Mr. President:

I have the honor to announce that the House has acceded to the request of the Senate for the appointment of a Conference Committee, consisting of 3 members of the House, on the amendments adopted by the House to the following Senate File: