

## STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

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

May 25, 2010

The Honorable Senator James Metzen President of the Senate 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. 322 State Capitol Building Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear President Metzen:

I write to inform you that Chapter 386, Senate File 251 has been vetoed. Although return of the bill to the house of origin and a veto message are not required because the Legislature has adjourned *sine die*, I wanted to share my concerns about this bill with the Legislature.

This bill would redefine the statutory definition of "motor vehicle" to include the trailer in a semi tractor-trailer combination, thereby exposing the owner of the trailer to tort liability for driver negligence.

This definitional change has sweeping legal implications that would upset established precedent, raise the cost of transporting goods during a recession, and threatens to disrupt the free flow of interstate commerce.

Trailer owners have little or no control over the driver and therefore should not be held responsible for their negligent acts. Currently, no other state has adopted this type of policy and Minnesota should not be an outlier.

Any statutory change in this area should be the product of stakeholder compromise that fairly and equitably balances competing interests. This legislation is severely imbalanced and is therefore vetoed.

Sincerely

Tim Pawlenty

Governor

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cc: Representative Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker of the House Senator Lawrence J. Pogemiller, Majority Leader Senator David Senjem, Minority Leader Senator Don Betzold Representative Kurt Zellers, Minority Leader Representative Mary Liz Holberg Mr. Peter S. Wattson, Secretary of the Senate (Legislative)

Mr. Albin Mathiowetz, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives

Mr. Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State