



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Mark Dayton

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

May 23, 2013

The Honorable Paul Thissen  
Speaker of the House  
Room 463, State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have received, approved, signed, and deposited in the Office of the Secretary of State Chapter 137, House File 1183, the Legacy Bill, with the exception of the line item vetoes listed below:

- Pages 13-14, lines 13.33-14.2: "\$6,300,000 in the first year is to the Metropolitan Council for grants to restore and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife in the metropolitan regional parks system."
- Page 16, lines 16.3-16.9: "Of this amount, \$3,000,000 is for aquatic invasive species grants to tribal and local governments with a delegation agreement under Minnesota Statutes, section 84D.105, subdivision 2, paragraph (g), for education, inspection, and decontamination activities at public water access, and other sites."

This decision is extremely difficult for me. I attach great importance to keeping my word. Unfortunately, in this instance, I have given contradictory assurances to legislators during the past few days and to thousands of Minnesotans during the past few years. I have decided that I must honor my promise to those citizens.

I believe that this decision also represents the best interests of the people of Minnesota, who care deeply about the Outdoor Heritage Fund of the Legacy Fund. In my thirteen legislative sessions, I have rarely seen the acrimony and distrust, which this dispute has caused between legislators and concerned citizens. The bitterness is not about the merits of the two projects I am vetoing, but rather the way in which they were added and other significant changes were proposed to the House bill.

As the legislative session approached its final hours, this battle over money, priorities, and prerogatives threatened to block passage of the entire Legacy Bill, which contained \$496 million of funding for important projects throughout our state. Last Sunday afternoon you, Senator Bakk, and I agreed to a compromise, in which the above two items would be included in the Legacy Conference Report. Although I had expressed my strong opposition to altering the recommendations of the Lessard-Sams Council before and during the session, it appeared at that time that our only two options were to: 1) agree to this compromise, or 2) jeopardize passage of the entire bill.

At that time, I hoped that the thousands of Minnesotans, who are deeply committed to the work of the Lessard-Sams Council, would accept our compromise. Since the bill's passage, however, I have heard from many organizations, representing thousands of our citizens, who

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believe my approval of those two items would betray the promises I have made repeatedly during the past four years to respect the Council's decisions.

I also note that investments in Metro parks, including habitat improvements, received other funding from the legislature this year:

- \$9.085mm from the Outdoor Heritage Fund for Metro habitat;
- \$33.774mm for Metro Parks and Trails grants from the Legacy Fund;
- \$17.08mm to the Metropolitan Council for base funding for regional parks, from the Environment Finance bill; and
- \$5.62mm from LCCMR for Metro-area habitat acquisition;

totaling \$65.559 million.

I also note that the following aquatic invasive species (AIS) received other funding from the Legislature this year as well, including:

- \$8.526mm was appropriated in the Environment Finance bill to combat AIS; and
- \$9.84mm was appropriate in the LCCMR bill for AIS research investments.

Nevertheless, my line-item vetoes do not reflect a lack of support for the two projects; rather they underscore my conviction that the House Legacy Committee must work with its citizen councils, not against them. I will ask the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to reconsider these two projects when it assembles its next funding recommendations.

I believe it is imperative that the leadership of the House Legacy Committee repair its relations with the Lessard-Sams Council and the many sportsmen, sportswomen, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, hunters, anglers, and everyone else committed to the enhancement of our state's priceless outdoor heritage. Otherwise, I have serious doubts that a Legacy Bill can be enacted in future legislative sessions.

Sincerely,



Mark Dayton  
Governor

cc: Representative Phyllis Kahn  
Senator Richard Cohen  
Senator Sandy Pappas, President of the Senate  
Senator Thomas M. Bakk, Senate Majority Leader  
Senator David W. Hann, Senate Minority Leader  
Representative Kurt Daudt, House Minority Leader  
The Honorable Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State  
Ms. JoAnne Zoff, Secretary of the Senate  
Mr. Albin A. Mathiowetz, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives