May 16, 1997

The Honorable Phil Carruthers  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
463 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Speaker Carruthers:

I have vetoed and am returning Chapter 163, House File 892, a bill which seeks to raise the minimum wage for employees of small Minnesota companies.

Since 1991, my administration has delivered a clear and unwavering position on the issue of the minimum wage. I will not accept changes to Minnesota’s minimum wage law which do not conform to the federal law.

Conformity to federal law goes beyond Chapter 163 to include both a tip credit and an opportunity wage. I refuse to isolate the wage practices of Minnesota from those of our neighboring states. With the adoption of this language, Minnesota would be at an economic disadvantage with our neighbors. In fact, the lack of a tip credit would place Minnesota’s mandated wage level as the highest in the region.

Minimum wage levels and policy are driven by national labor trends monitored by the federal government. Minnesota would be foolish to veer from such clear and well placed guidance.

Warmest regards,

ARNE H. CARLSON  
Governor

c:  Senator Allan Spear, President of the Senate  
Senator Roger Moe, Majority Leader  
Senator Dean Johnson, Minority Leader  
Representative Steve Sviggum, Minority Leader  
Chief Senate Author(s)  
Chief House Author(s)  
Mr. Patrick E. Flahaven, Secretary of the Senate  
Mr. Edward A. Burdick, Chief Clerk of the House  
Ms. Joan Anderson Growe, Secretary of State