May 22, 2009

The Honorable Senator James Metzen
President of the Senate
322 State Capitol Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear President Metzen:

I have vetoed and am returning Senate File 1331, Chapter 162, an omnibus elections bill. This bill makes a number of changes to existing election laws.

Election laws set forth rules relating to the fundamental right to vote and the government's administration of those rights. The details of these laws matter, and the manner in which they are adopted matters as well. Omnibus election bills making changes to our election process should be bipartisan. Unfortunately, this bill fails that test.

I am also opposed to the change in this bill moving the primary from September to August.

This bill included language seeking to clarify the limitations on exit pollsters, which has been the subject of court challenge. Although I have vetoed this bill on other grounds, it is my hope this matter can be resolved when the Legislature returns next session.

Election law reform is needed in Minnesota. My hope is that bipartisan legislation will be passed during next year's legislative session, in time for the 2010 general election.

Sincerely,

Tim Pawlenty
Governor
cc:  Representative Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker of the House
     Senator Lawrence J. Pogemiller, Majority Leader
     Senator David Senjem, Minority Leader
     Senator Katie Sieben
     Representative Marty Seifert, Minority Leader
     Representative Ryan Winkler
     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