

Mr. Moe, R.D. moved that S.F. No. 2267 and the veto message thereon be laid on the table. The motion prevailed.

March 26, 1996

The Honorable Allan H. Spear  
President of the Senate

Dear President Spear:

I have vetoed and am returning Chapter 375, Senate File 1086, a bill that restricts individuals with principal campaign committees and political party units from engaging in certain types of political speech.

Chapter 375 prohibits the use of campaign funds raised through the political contribution refund program from being used "for the purpose of attempting to influence legislative ... action ... by communicating or urging others to communicate with public or local officials;"

Under the bill, a legislator or constitutional officer could not use funds raised in this manner - typically from donors of small amounts - to send out legislative "questionnaires" or other communications designed to influence public policy.

Similarly, a candidate for office could not use funds raised in this manner to urge voters to contact the incumbent about issues of public policy due to come up in the legislature. To do so would be to urge others to communicate with a public official.

These restrictions are unreasonable, but there is a more fundamental problem with the bill.

Campaigns and elections are about ideas and the type of future the voters want. The ideas and promises of a campaign should not disappear the day after the election. This is true whether a candidate wins or loses, or whether an officeholder will be a candidate again. Minnesota has chosen to allow use of funds raised in this manner for campaigns. You, the legislature, established his policy. Consequently taxpayers are funding the debate over issues, ideas, and the future direction of the state.

Responsible policy makers understand that the actual implementation of the ideas or philosophy promised the voters in an election is a crucial step in shaping public policy. That often requires informing the public and legislators about issues.

If one accepts the use of funds raised in this manner for running campaigns, then I believe it would be hypocritical to try and severely limit their use in subsequent communications with voters. Such grassroots communications can be critical in the transformation of public opinion into public policy.

If the authors of the bill are offended by the political use of money raised through the state's political contribution refund credit then they should send me a bill to repeal the whole program.

Warmest regards,  
Arne H. Carlson, Governor

Mr. Moe, R.D. moved that S.F. No. 1086 and the veto message thereon be laid on the table. The motion prevailed.

March 27, 1996

The Honorable Allan H. Spear  
President of the Senate

Dear President Spear:

It is my honor to inform you that I have received, approved, signed and deposited in the Office of the Secretary of State, Chapter 390, Senate File No. 2857 (with the exception of Page 2, section 3, lines 21 through 38).

Warmest regards,  
Arne H. Carlson, Governor