



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

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

May 29, 2008

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

Dear President Metzen:

I write to inform you that I have vetoed Senate File 1948, a legislative resolution related to "Peak Oil." Although return of the bill to the house of origin and a veto message is not required because the Legislature has adjourned *sine die*, I wanted to share my reasons for this veto with the Legislature.

Using a legislative resolution to direct state executive branch action is an inappropriate use of the legislative resolution process. In addition, a legislative resolution requiring agencies to conduct a statewide assessment study regarding "peak oil" without identifying appropriate funding or other support for the study is not an effective step in our efforts.

This is the third of three resolutions passed by the Legislature that I have vetoed this year. If the Legislature desires to enact policy, it should pass a law and provide the funding necessary to implement the policy. Legislative resolutions should not be a substitute for legitimate debate or a way to circumvent the lawmaking process provided by the Minnesota Constitution.

My Administration will continue to prepare Minnesota for the energy challenges of the 21st Century and has already taken action to reduce our state's reliance on foreign sources of energy. In January I announced the creation of the Office of Energy Security (OES) in the Department of Commerce. Under the direction of Edward Garvey, OES continues to examine these and other issues to ensure that Minnesota is at the leading edge of energy reform efforts.

As to the substance of the resolution, "Peak Oil" refers to a concept regarding the point of maximum production of the world's oil supply, after which the rate of production declines.

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Researchers have differing viewpoints regarding when "peak oil" will occur. A report by the Energy Information Administration (EIA) section of the U.S. Department of Energy states that, depending on demand, peak world conventional crude oil production "could plausibly occur anywhere between 2021 at a volume of 48.5 billion barrels per year and 2112 at a volume of 24.6 billion barrels per year, though neither of these extremes has a substantial probability of occurrence."

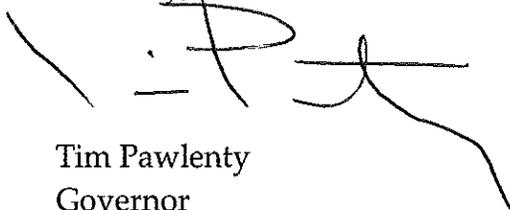
The EIA researchers note that the peak of worldwide production of crude oil depends in part on the growth in demand, "which is subject to reduction via both technological advancements in petroleum product usage such as hybrid-powered automobiles and the substitution of new energy source technologies such as hydrogen-fed fuel cells."

While reasonable people may disagree about timing and ultimate usage of the world's oil supplies, most agree that strong action must be taken to create a better, cleaner and more secure energy future. Minnesota is already leading the way through a variety of measures including increased utilization of renewable transportation fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel; incentives to increase the use of wind, solar, and other renewable resources; enactment of the nation's strongest renewable energy standard for electricity generation; and nation-leading energy conservation efforts.

Minnesota is doing its part to reduce reliance on oil through conservation and replacement of oil with homegrown alternative fuels. In recent years, the number of vehicle miles drive by Minnesotans has flattened out. Minnesota is also a national leader in the production and use of alternative fuels. Our state is testing plug-in hybrid vehicles and promoting hydrogen as an alternative energy source. Continuing to reduce our reliance on oil will provide greater benefits than conducting another study.

I share the concern about "Peak Oil" and have taken strong steps to change Minnesota's and America's energy policy. This resolution, while well-intended, is not an appropriate mechanism to address these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Pawlenty". The signature is stylized with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal stroke.

Tim Pawlenty
Governor

Senator Metzen/SF 1948

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Cc: Senator Lawrence J. Pogemiller, Majority Leader
Senator David Senjem, Minority Leader
Senator Jim Carlson
Representative Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker of the House
Representative Marty Seifert, Minority Leader
Representative Bill Hilty
Mr. Patrick E. Flahaven, Secretary of the Senate
Mr. Al Mathiowetz, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives
Mr. Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State