



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

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

May 8, 2009

The Honorable 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 122, Chapter 47, a bill requiring retailers to post a warning regarding the effect of unprocessed cocoa bean mulch on pets.

Many of us are pet lovers and will go to considerable lengths to care for and protect our pets. This legislation is well intended, but it is an example of legislative overreach.

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' Animal Poison Control Center, there are only a small number of cocoa bean mulch ingestion incidents each year. Very few result in death.

Many household and outdoor items are harmful to pets if ingested. Retailers are generally not required to post warnings at the point of purchase for those products.

I share the goal that we should take reasonable precautions to protect our pets. However, it is unreasonable to ask all retailers to post signs at the point of purchase for such products. A better approach would be to require manufacturers to post warning labels on the products themselves, where necessary and appropriate. We should also supplement efforts to protect our pets by raising public awareness regarding products that are potentially harmful to them.

Additionally, the bill language is unclear regarding the extent a business would be liable for not properly displaying warning signs.

Sen. Metzen/SF122

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I sincerely appreciate the intentions and efforts of the legislators and advocates who supported this legislation. I hope we can find other ways to advocate for the safety of our pets.



Tim Pawlenty
Governor

cc: Representative Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker of the House
Senator Lawrence J. Pogemiller, Majority Leader
Senator David Senjem, Minority Leader
Senator Scott Dibble
Representative Marty Seifert, Minority Leader
Representative Frank Hornstein
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