



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

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

May 24, 2011

The Honorable Kurt Zellers
Speaker of the House
State Office Building, Room 463
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Speaker:

With this letter, I am vetoing and returning Chapter 50, House File 1101, the Higher Education Finance Bill. The deep cuts for the University of Minnesota and Minnesota's State Colleges and Universities would cause hundreds of faculty layoffs, tuition increases, and fewer courses available to students. Minnesota would have a harder time providing employers with employees who have the skills and education they require. When the future of our state depends on strong institutions of higher education, H.F. 1101 includes, in real dollars, the deepest cuts to higher education in our state's history.

The cuts of 19% to the University of Minnesota and 14% to MnSCU are far too extreme. The total appropriations leave both the University of Minnesota and MnSCU with substantially lower levels of state funding at the same time they are serving 50,000 more students. Your bill contains \$240 million less than my recommendation and is unacceptable to me.

The combination of reduced funding and tuition caps included in the bill would unwisely limit the systems' abilities to manage the severe funding reductions. The proper entities to make final tuition decisions within our two state systems are the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents and MnSCU's Board of Trustees.

The funding for the Office of Higher Education is also too low. The reductions for administrative support would limit the agency's ability to provide critical services, such as student financial aid: work-study, grants, and loans. The combined effects of additional cuts proposed in the State Government bill could force on OHE a 42% reduction in staff funded through the General Fund.

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The bill contains a policy provision that prohibits the use of state or federal funds to support human cloning or to pay for any expenses incidental to human cloning. The definition included in the bill is vague and could threaten further development of stem cell research. It is imperative for Minnesota's bio-medical future that both the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic approve of any language affecting this vital area of research, which has the potential to bring thousands of jobs to Minnesota and save many thousands more lives.

The choices we made as leaders are a reflection of our values and priorities. Our colleges and universities, as well as our highly-skilled and educated workforce, are part of what make Minnesota great. I am returning this bill to you with the hope that we can come together and compromise, and demonstrate our commitment to our students and to higher education in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Dayton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "D".

Mark Dayton
Governor

cc: Senator Michelle L. Fischbach, President of the Senate
Senator Amy T. Koch, Majority Leader
Senator Thomas M. Bakk, Minority Leader
Representative Paul Thissen, Minority Leader
Representative Bud Nornes
The Honorable Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State
Mr. Cal R. Ludeman, Secretary of the Senate
Mr. Albin A. Mathiowetz, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives