



# 2007 Accomplishments

*The Pawlenty Administration*  
*Paying for Performance ♦ Investing in the Future*

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**Total budget = \$34.68 billion for two years**  
(FY2008-09)

- ▶ No tax increases.
- ▶ Spending held to a 10.1% increase over two years, not including the impact of potential vetoes.

“This budget doesn’t raise taxes and it also targets key priorities like education, renewable energy and veterans while keeping a lid on spending.”

*Governor Tim Pawlenty*

## E-12 Education

- Continuation of the **QComp** performance and professional pay initiative, aimed at encouraging professional development and rewarding quality teacher performance.
- \$13 million for **dual enrollment high school programs** like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and College in the Schools.
- **Per-pupil funding formula** increase of \$244 million for the two year budget.
- \$6 million to provide families of at-risk pre-kindergartners with scholarships to prepare these children for kindergarten.
- Creation of new regional **Math and Science Academies** that will provide professional development for all teachers and enhancements of statewide Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (**STEM**) initiatives.
- Additional funding includes \$329 million for **Special Education** programs, \$16 million increase in **early childhood** programs, \$5.4 million for **gifted and talented** programs, and over \$90 million for **technology** in Minnesota schools.

## Higher Education

- **University of Minnesota** - \$174.6 million.
- **Minnesota State Colleges and University System (MnSCU)** - \$151.8 million.
- Funding for **ACHIEVE**, Governor Pawlenty's proposal to allow high school students to take college level courses, earn college credit, and receive a scholarship to any Minnesota college or university.
- The University of Minnesota and MnSCU will each be able to receive a one-time **performance bonus**, based on measurable outcomes.
- The **Minnesota GI Bill**, a part of the Governor's Military and Veterans Support Package, will provide postsecondary education benefits to returning veterans and the spouses and children of veterans who have been severely disabled or killed in action.

## Health & Human Services

- **Mental health initiative** funding to improve the accessibility, quality and accountability of publicly funded mental health services.

- Creation of a **new uniform billing and coding process** to increase system efficiency and lower health care costs.
- **E-Health** investments to move Minnesota toward an interoperable electronic medical record and personal health record system.
- Additional money for **pandemic flu** planning and preparations
- Funding for **QCare** – Quality Care and Rewarding Excellence – a program that rewards top providers while saving millions of dollars in health care costs.

## Environment, Energy & Natural Resources

### Clean Water Initiatives

- \$53.7 million across all state agencies for all programs related to **Clean Water Legacy** including:
  - \$2.5 million for the **Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program** that provides loans to landowners within impaired watersheds to improve water quality.
  - \$1.1 million for **Research, Evaluation and Effectiveness Monitoring** projects, primarily through the University of Minnesota.
- Minnesota became the first state to formally ratify the **Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact** to improve and protect the health of the Great Lakes and the state's economy.

### Next Generation Energy Initiative

- Minnesota is leading the nation with a new "**25 by '25**" **renewable energy requirement**. The standard first proposed by Governor Pawlenty requires energy companies to provide 25 percent of electricity from renewable sources by 2025.
- **The 25 x '25 Goal** aims for agriculture, forestry and working lands to produce at least 25 percent of the total energy consumed in Minnesota and expands the Fuel Replacement Goal to 25 percent by 2025.
- **The Next Generation Energy Board** will be created to research and recommend how the state can most efficiently achieve energy independence, agricultural and natural resources sustainability, and rural economic vitality.

- **Next Generation Energy Grants** totaling \$1.4 million for biofuels and biomass research including the creation of a biomass fuel supply depot in LeSueur or Scott County and a feasibility study of renewable forest resources by the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa.
- **25x'25 Grants** of \$1 million for on-farm biogas recovery facilities, or methane digesters, and another \$1 million to continue the state's solar rebate program.
- The **E85 Everywhere** initiative will receive \$3 million to double the number of E85 pumps in Minnesota.
- A funding pool of \$4.25 million for **renewable energy research** is created and includes:
  - \$1.25 million for continuation of the **Clean Energy Resource Teams** in Greater Minnesota and the addition of metro area activities.
  - \$2 million for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and other **automotive technology demonstrations** such as E85 conversion kit testing.
- The commissioners of DEED, Agriculture, Commerce and the Public Utilities Commission will develop a strategy to ensure Minnesota achieves maximum economic benefit from enhanced renewable energy activities.
- Legislation proposed by Governor Pawlenty sets an **aggressive energy saving goal** for Minnesotans to reduce use of fossil-fuel energy by 15% by 2015 and a goal of 1,000 Energy Star commercial buildings in the state by 2010

## **Other Natural Resources and Environment Initiatives**

- The first finance package based on the recommendations of the reorganized **Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources** will fund \$22.9 million in natural resources projects, including:
  - \$14.8 million for land projects that include forest legacy conservation easements, habitat corridors and state and metro park acquisition.
  - \$5 million for water resource projects.
  - \$2 million for natural resource information gathering such as county biological surveys and soil surveys.
- To improve the health and productivity of **Minnesota's forestlands**, \$5 million will be used to implement recommendations of the Governor's Forest Industry Task Force.
- \$3.7 million to expand Minnesota's fight against **invasive species** including emerald ash borers, spiny waterfleas, Asian carp, milfoil, gypsy moths, and zebra mussels.

- \$14 million in **SCORE Grants** for county solid waste initiatives including recycling, education, and management of problem materials such as household hazardous waste.
- **Wetlands Conservation Act** is funded with \$2.2 million to increase long-term public/private working lands initiatives and commitment to enhance habitat for migratory and breeding birds.
- Funding to restore a full complement of **conservation officers** for the first time in 40 years.

## Agriculture & Veterans

### Agriculture

- The **Minnesota Grown** program will receive \$397,000 to continue the successful partnership between the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the growers and processors of quality Minnesota Grown products.
- **Bovine tuberculosis** eradication and surveillance efforts will continue with \$811,000 to test cattle herds and provide technical support.
- The **Rural Finance Authority** revolving loan account is expanded to include disaster recovery assistance to help farmers clean up, repair or replace farm structures damaged by storms or replace watering systems due to drought.
- **Invasive species and pest management** efforts will be funded with \$739,000 to keep invasive species such as emerald ash borer and gypsy moth out of Minnesota.
- **Ethanol Producer Payments** will continue with \$30.3 million in funding. As the number of eligible producers diminishes, any remaining funds will be designated for a value-added agricultural product processing and marketing grant program.
- The non-profit **Agricultural Utilization Research Institute** will receive \$6.2 million to continue its work to improve the economy of rural Minnesota through new uses and new markets for the state's agricultural commodities. AURI will also continue the Renewable Energy Roundtable.

### Veterans and Military Family Support

- A \$3.4 million **Veteran Affairs Communication and Outreach** program will reach Minnesota veterans through tribal service officers, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, and a statewide marketing plan.

- **State Reintegration Initiative** will continue with \$1.5 million for reintegration efforts for redeployed service members.
- **Increase County Veterans Service Officers Grants** to \$1.5 million to enhance benefits and programs including outreach, reintegration, and reducing homelessness among veterans.
- \$2 million is directed to 61 **Minnesota National Guard armories** for routine maintenance made difficult due to deployments and budget pressures and \$185,000 to pay special assessments levied by communities against state owned properties.
- **General Support Appropriation Increase** of \$560,000 for staff to provide immediate support for active duty personnel and to better coordinate with state and federal agencies.
- \$900,000 to expand the **Veterans Assistance Offices on Campus Program** for veterans, military members, and their families.
- **The State Soldier Assistance Program** receives \$2 million for cash assistance for shelter payments, utilities, and personal needs grants to veterans who are unable to work as a result of temporary disability.
- **Department of Veteran Affairs** will receive \$500,000 to support director level positions at the DVA and an ombudsman for the Veterans Home Board.
- **Ensuring firearms certification** for returning veterans who work in occupations such as police officer, game warden, correctional official, or private security guard.

## Economic Development

- The **Minnesota Investment Fund** will receive \$5 million to help create new jobs and leverage private funding, boosting the economic vitality of Minnesota communities. Included is funding for the Thomson West expansion that will result in 2,000 new jobs and \$100 million of new construction.
- Investing over \$25 million in new funding at Minnesota Housing Finance to develop and protect affordable housing, including \$15 million infusion into the **Housing Challenge Program** that partners with private developers and local governments to build affordable housing units where jobs are located.
- \$15 million to Minnesota Housing Finance to continue efforts started in 2003 to **end chronic homelessness** in Minnesota and to meet the goal of providing 1,200 housing opportunities this two year budget cycle.
- **Natural disaster assistance** is provided for Browns Valley, Rogers, LeSeuer, and Warroad.

## Public Safety

- Increased funding of \$6.2 million for **victims of crime**, including reparations and the automated victim information notification system (VINE).
- Funding for 15 new **forensic scientists** for the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to reduce turnaround time for examination of physical evidence at the BCA laboratory.
- Funding to complete **ARMER**, the Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response radio system that will improve the ability of public safety providers to communicate and respond in a coordinated manner to natural and man made disasters.
- **Ten new judgeships will be established** with \$8.2 million, enabling Minnesota's court system to keep pace with rising caseloads and expand capacity to handle cases in a timely manner. Three judges will be added in the First Judicial District, one in the Seventh Judicial District, one in the Ninth Judicial District, two in the Tenth Judicial District, and a three judge panel for the Court of Appeals.
- **Offender supervision** will be enhanced with \$8 million for additional agents to monitor 131,000 + offenders in the community and additional community-based sex offender treatment.
- \$4.2 million to maintain and establish new **drug courts** that handle nonviolent criminal cases linked to substance addiction.
- An additional \$1 million to maintain **offender work crews** around the state.
- \$4.5 million in new funding for **offender re-entry** to help reduce recidivism rate.
- \$1.5 million in new funding for expansion of **Youth Intervention Programs**. A recent study concluded that the state saves \$4.76 for every dollar invested in these programs.
- \$2 million in **COPS grants** for law enforcement overtime in high crime areas.
- \$2.5 million to fund the **Gang and Drug Task Force**

## Other Accomplishments

- Governor Pawlenty signed the **Freedom to Breathe Act**, protecting Minnesotans from secondhand smoke in bars, restaurants, private clubs and other workplaces.
- The **Car Buyers Bill of Rights** outlines rights of consumers and obligations of car dealers in financial transactions.
- **Gift cards** or certificates will no longer have an expiration date or a service fee.

- Children under the age of 18 are now prohibited from getting **body piercing**, other than the earlobe, without the written consent of a parent or legal guardian.
- To deal with **predatory lending practices**, residential mortgage loans can no longer be made without verifying the borrower's reasonable ability to pay and mortgage companies will no longer be able to arrange a loan if it does not benefit the borrower.
- **Mortgage fees** will be kept below 5% of the loan value by further limiting charges that can be financed and prepayment penalties are eliminated for sub-prime loans.
- **Mortgage fraud** is now a specific crime in Minnesota law and borrowers are allowed to seek compensatory and other damages from mortgage lenders.
- **Mortgage regulation** is strengthened by requiring lenders to be Minnesota corporations, meet minimum net worth requirements, and authorizing periodic examinations by the Department of Commerce.
- After some **amusement ride** accidents, the Department of Labor and Industry worked with the industry to strengthen the safety guidelines for inspections of rides to include an annual inspection by a certified amusement ride inspector and daily inspections performed by the operator.
- Minnesota merchants will be prohibited from collecting and storing private data contained on a debit card or credit card or coded in the magnetic strip.