



2003 - 2009 Accomplishments

The Pawlenty Administration

Fiscal Responsibility ♦ Accountable Government

An A (Agriculture) to V (Veterans) look at accomplishments of the Pawlenty Administration

Agriculture

The Pawlenty Administration has promoted Minnesota agriculture by expanding markets through biofuels and exports, while addressing threats.

- Created the **Livestock Investment Grant Program** to provide grants to qualifying livestock producers who make improvements to their operations. Grants equal ten percent of the first \$500,000 of investment, with a minimum investment of \$4,000.
- Commissioned the **Livestock Advisory Task Force** and implemented its recommendations to strengthen the economic health of Minnesota's \$10 billion livestock industry. Actions included proposed tax credits and financial incentives to encourage on-farm investment and education, outreach programs, and reform of the permitting process making it easier to navigate, while still maintaining environmental safeguards.
- Created the Agricultural Growth, Research and Innovation Program (AGRI) to provide grants and loans for emerging agricultural needs.
- Secured \$6.2 million in funding to help eradicate **bovine tuberculosis** in Minnesota through increased livestock testing, tightened restrictions on animal movement, fencing assistance and optional herd “buy-outs” for livestock producers.
- Chaired the national **Governors Ethanol Coalition**, encouraging other states to implement the use of renewable fuels and promoting biofuel research and use.
- Advocated for **federal disaster assistance** for Minnesota farmers and ranchers affected by drought. Directed state agencies to redirect existing resources to assist livestock producers affected by drought conditions.
- Developed a comprehensive **avian flu response plan** to ensure an effective and rapid response in the event of an outbreak in Minnesota or the U.S.

- Focused the attention of the nation’s governors on the opportunities presented by **“Americanizing” the country’s energy supply** through the National Governors Association initiative “Securing a Clean Energy Future.” This effort brought states together to move the nation forward on renewable energy, energy efficiency, reasonable greenhouse gas reduction efforts, and accelerated research and development.
- **B2 to B20** – As proposed by Governor Pawlenty at Farm Fest 2007, Minnesota move from 2 percent to 20 percent biodiesel content in diesel fuel by 2015.
- Chaired the Midwestern Governors Association and made development of **farm bill recommendations** a key policy focus.
- In 2005, led the **largest state trade delegation in U.S. history to China** with a focus on expanding agricultural exports – specifically dairy, meat, wheat and soybean products. Minnesota has moved from 7th to 5th nationally in agricultural exports, largely due to growth in meat exports to Asia.
- In 2007, led a **delegation to India** of 73 Minnesota business leaders, government officials and media to explore trade and investment opportunities and connect with key Indian and U.S. business organizations.
- Minnesota ranks **first in the nation** in production of turkeys, sugar beets, and green peas according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Budget and Taxes

As solid fiscal stewards of taxpayer money, the Pawlenty Administration has ensured that state government lives within its means.

- **Balanced the state budget four times without raising taxes**, including eliminating a \$4.5 billion deficit in 2003 and a \$4.8 billion deficit in 2009.
- **Will use executive actions to resolve** the remaining \$2.7 billion shortfall in the FY 2010-11 budget. The Governor’s actions will result in the state general fund budget decreasing in real terms from FY 2008-09 to FY 2010-11, the first such decrease in the state’s history.
- Succeeded in achieving the long-standing state goal of **moving Minnesota out of the top ten highest taxed states**, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.
- **Reduced state government growth** to average two-year budget increases of less than 6 percent during the past six years, the lowest budget increases under any Governor in at least the past 40 years. (By comparison, average budget growth under Governor Ventura was approximately 12 percent, under Governor Carlson 11.7 percent, under Governor Perpich 13.6 percent).

- **Vetoed all bills raising taxes**, including setting a single-session record for a Minnesota Governor with 34 bills vetoed in 2008. The Governor vetoed an additional 30 bills in 2009. Governor Pawlenty vetoed 100 bills during the past seven years.
- Guided Minnesota to an **A- in the national grading of the state's financial management**. Only three states ranked higher.

Business and Jobs

The Pawlenty Administration has opposed tax increases, invested in emerging sectors and worked to make Minnesota an attractive place to grow jobs.

- Minnesota ranks **first in the nation in Fortune 500 companies per capita**, based on U.S. Census Bureau and Fortune magazine data.
- Created the **Job Opportunity Building Zone (JOBZ)** program in 2004 to stimulate economic activity in Greater Minnesota. JOBZ helps new and expanding businesses produce quality jobs through local and state tax exemptions. Since its creation, JOBZ has been involved in 323 projects, resulting in commitments of 5,169 new jobs, helping to retain 9,743 existing jobs and producing more than \$580 million in new capital investments.
- Allowed small towns to **access the Public Facilities Authority's high investment bond rating** for wastewater, drinking water and storm water facilities. This helps lower costs at the local level and provides assistance in offering a complete financial package for critical job creating efforts.
- Established the **Office of Science and Technology** at the Department of Employment and Economic Development to help small businesses and entrepreneurs access federal grant programs for technology development.
- **Opposed tax increases** to ensure work, savings, investment, and entrepreneurship are encouraged.
- Began the **Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development (SEED)** initiative to help strengthen communities and expand the small business base throughout Minnesota. The effort will develop and grow entrepreneurs, provide new capital for rural businesses, and provide a sustained competitive advantage for rural Minnesota.
- Proposed and signed **Single Sales Factor Apportionment Formula**, a fairer corporate tax formula that encourages employers to make investments in Minnesota.
- Protected Minnesota workers by enacting historic reform to ensure the long-term solvency of the **Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund**.

- Completed the merger of the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) and the Department of Economic Security (DES) into the **Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)**, a one-stop shop for workforce development.
- Signed “Joint and Several Liability” **tort reform** into law to make Minnesota a fairer place to do business.
- Minnesota ranks **first in the nation in the production of medical devices** according to a University of Massachusetts study.

Energy

The Pawlenty Administration has promoted a reliable, low-cost environmentally superior energy system.

- Created the **Minnesota Office of Energy Security** within the Department of Commerce. The office coordinates state policy, programs and information on energy and related issues.
- Created the **Clean Energy Technology Collaborative** by executive order. The group provides advice and recommendations to the Governor on advances in technology and research necessary to achieve Minnesota’s long-term clean energy goals.
- Established Minnesota as America’s “**Renewable Fuels Capital.**”
 - **Doubled the amount of ethanol** to be used in Minnesota’s gasoline from 10 percent to 20 percent. This legislation was initiated by Governor Pawlenty in 2005, and the state is seeking a waiver from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in order for the E20 standard to be implemented by 2013.
 - Created ambitious goals to reduce the amount of petroleum used in state vehicles, **expanding the use of E85 and other alternative fuels.**
 - Implemented the **nation’s first biodiesel requirement**, blending 2 percent soy-based fuel with all diesel fuel. The amount is being expanded to 20 percent by 2015.
 - Quadrupled the number of **E85 fueling stations** in Minnesota, to more than 370 pumps, the most in any state. Secured \$3 million for use in grants to increase the number of E-85 pumps across the state.
- Proposed, in both the 2006 and 2007 State of the State Addresses, and passed a **25 x ’25 renewable energy standard** – one of the strongest in the nation. Twenty-five percent of the energy used in Minnesota will come from renewable sources by 2025.

- **Strengthened Minnesota's renewable energy laws**, resulting in a doubling in the amount of wind energy installed in Minnesota by 2007, in a way that allows consideration of cost and reliability impacts on Minnesota consumers. Minnesota already gets 11 percent of its electricity from renewable resources and will get 20 percent by 2015.
- Proposed and signed into law the **Next Generation Energy Initiative**, nation-leading policy regarding energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction targets.
- Created the **Next Generation Energy Board** to research and recommend how the state can most efficiently achieve energy independence, agricultural and natural resources sustainability, and rural economic vitality.
- Secured funding for **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.
- Supported **25 x '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.
- Passed legislation to establish a nation-leading goal of 800 megawatts of locally-owned **Minnesota wind projects** by 2010.
- Consistently advocated for passage of energy legislation that **balances the need for new power with customer concerns about increased electric rates**.
- **Strengthened Minnesota's nation-leading energy conservation programs** by signing into law the 2007 Demand-Efficiency Program, which builds on the Governor's commitment to the Conservation Improvement Program. This new initiative sets an annual goal of 1.5 percent energy savings per capita.
- **Cleaned up old coal plants on the Minneapolis and St. Paul riverfronts.** Negotiated a cost-effective agreement between Xcel Energy, environmentalists, and business interests to convert the High Bridge and Riverside coal plants in St. Paul and Minneapolis to clean burning natural gas.
- Proposed and passed **Mercury Emissions Reduction legislation** to reduce mercury emitted by the state's largest power plants by 90 percent by 2015, **touted by the business community and environmentalists as a model for the nation**.
- Ensured the safe operation of the state's emission-free, reliable, low-cost nuclear power plant in the **Prairie Island** legislation.
- Attracted an **international windmill blade manufacturer** to Pipestone, creating 260 new jobs.

- Provided **more energy assistance to more people than ever before** in the 2005-06 winter; including making sure that no utility turned off the heat to any customer that winter.
- Supported \$4.25 million for **renewable energy research** including: \$1.25 million for continuation of the **Clean Energy Resource Teams** in Greater Minnesota and the addition of metro area activities, and \$2 million for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and other **automotive technology demonstrations** such as E-85 conversion kit testing.
- Set an **aggressive energy saving goal** for Minnesotans to reduce use of fossil-fuel energy by 15 percent by 2015 and a goal of 1,000 Energy Star commercial buildings in the state by 2010

Government Reform

The Pawlenty Administration has increased efficiency and accountability in state government.

- Launched the largest government reform effort in the last 15 years, the **Drive to Excellence**, through a series of executive orders. This effort is transforming state government to eliminate duplication, reduce bureaucracy and improve customer service. This effort is estimated to have the potential to save taxpayers as much as \$570 million.
- **Reformed state construction projects** to include industry leading practices that reduce bureaucracy expedite construction projects and save taxpayer dollars.
- Created the new **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** through the merger of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Office of Environmental Assistance, better positioning the state to meet environmental challenges by providing a single point of contact for environmental permits, information, education and training.
- **Reorganized and consolidated state government agencies**, eliminating Minnesota Planning, a cabinet-level agency, by combining it with the Department of Administration to deliver state products and services faster, better and more cost-effectively, saving taxpayers \$3.3 million and reducing the department's work force by 30.
- **Merged the Department of Employee Relations** into the Departments of Finance and Administration.
- Enacted significant **innovations to state government** operations, allowing some outsourcing and electronic bidding for state services.

- Redesigned the **Local Government Aid** formula so that cities receive aid based on their need.

Health Care

Under the Pawlenty Administration reforms have been made to make Minnesota's health care system market-driven, patient-centered, and quality-focused.

- Under Governor Pawlenty's leadership, Minnesota is ranked as **the healthiest state in America**, according to CQ Press.
- Minnesota is first in the nation with the **lowest heart disease death rate** of any state, according to the American Heart Association.
- Minnesota has the **second lowest rate of people without health insurance**, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Minnesota is nation-leading in **health care transparency**, with Minnesota consumers able to access more health care price and quality information than any other state.
- Minnesota will be the first state in the nation to require all health care providers use **e-prescribing** to electronically send accurate and error-free prescriptions from the point-of-care to the pharmacy.
- Patient-centered "**health care homes**" are being developed to provide comprehensive primary care. Medical homes will help patients coordinate care, especially for chronic diseases, in an often complex and confusing system.
- Proposed and passed **health care payment reform** based on financial incentives to improve quality, reduce cost, engage consumers in decision-making, and encourage more competition.
- Uninsured Minnesotans who are eligible for a pre-tax medical account and purchase insurance in the private market are now eligible for a new **20 percent insurance premium tax credit**.
- A grant program will help **small employers** establish pre-tax Section 125 plans that allow individuals to pay insurance premiums before taxes are deducted.
- Compared to baseline projections, the health care reform bill signed by the Governor in 2008 is estimated to have the potential for cost savings of about 12 percent by 2015. This represents a **potential savings of about \$6.9 billion** compared to baseline projections.

- Governor Pawlenty signed legislation that lowers **the legal age for blood donors** from age 17 to age 16. The bill was conceived by a high school student who was unable to donate blood at a school blood drive because of his age.
- Under “**Justin’s Law**” signed by Governor Pawlenty, a prescription or drug order for commonly abused prescriptions is not valid unless it is based on a documented patient evaluation.
- Governor Pawlenty signed the **Abigail Taylor Pool Safety Act** that requires pool operators to conduct regular inspections and improve the safety of pool drains.
- A **study of mesothelioma**, a rare form of cancer that has been found in large numbers among mineworkers in northeastern Minnesota, will be conducted by the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Health.
- Minnesotans will have greater **flexibility in calculating income and property assets** when applying for long-term care through a state facility.
- Conformed Minnesota state laws to federal tax laws for **Health Savings Accounts** ensuring that people can take full advantage of this program.
- Created **QCare – Quality Care and Rewarding Excellence**, a new quality standard that will be used to reward top performing health care providers while saving money. QCare identifies quality measures, sets aggressive outcome targets for health care providers, makes comparable measures transparent to the public and changes the payment system to reward quality rather than quantity.
- Supported and signed into law the new **Flexible Benefit Plan** to reduce the cost of health care allowing employers to eliminate unnecessary mandates in the insurance plan they offer their employees.
- Developed nation-leading **RxConnect website** for individuals to purchase their prescription drugs from Canada and the United Kingdom.
- Created **RxPrice Compare website** that allows Minnesotans to shop and compare price information for prescription drugs across Minnesota.
- Established the **Smart Buy Alliance**, an improved way for employers and groups to buy health care for their employees and members. The state of Minnesota joined with private business and labor groups to drive quality improvements and efficiencies in the health care delivery system. Alliance members have agreed to set uniform performance standards, cost/quality reporting requirements, and technology demands on health plans and providers and to favor providers and health plans that are certified for highest quality.
- Created **MinnesotaHealthInfo.com**, a clearinghouse for healthcare consumer information in Minnesota.

- Developed the **nation's most comprehensive report card for nursing homes** that helps Minnesotans compare patient satisfaction and quality of care in Minnesota nursing homes.
- Protected patients by being the first state in the nation to require the **reporting of certain medical errors** in hospitals.
- Supported and signed legislation to require hospitals, providers, health plans and pharmacists to **disclose price information** to the public so consumers can better understand what they are paying for health care.
- Supported the creation of a statewide hospital **Trauma System** so that no matter where an accident or injury occurs in the state, a person is brought and treated at the most appropriate hospital.
- **Improved the health of Minnesotans** through the creation of the “Get Up, Get Out, Get Fit” campaign. Created Fit Schools, Fit Cities and Fit Workplaces to reward organizations for achievements in health.
- Enacted an infusion of \$5 million to continue preparations to defend against the threat of a **Bird Flu pandemic** in Minnesota.
- **Improved our mental health system** by creating a new web-based system that will track the availability of mental health services to address the crisis faced by emergency rooms. Also investments will be made in statewide crisis services and for additional mental health clinicians.
- Created the Minnesota e-Health Advisory Committee and advanced \$1.5 million in grants to underserved areas to **accelerate the adoption of interoperable medical records** making health care safer, more effective and more efficient.
- Made Minnesota the **first in the nation to implement pay-for-performance** for diabetes management in public programs and the state health plan.
- Created a **Health Cabinet** to help control health care costs and improve health care in Minnesota through purchasing alliances that will use market forces to reward and encourage higher quality care, better use of technology and use of centers of excellence for care, the promotion of “health savings accounts,” and the streamlining of paperwork, bureaucracy and regulations.
- Signed the **Freedom to Breathe Act**, protecting Minnesotans from secondhand smoke in bars, restaurants, private clubs and other workplaces.
- Creation of a **new uniform billing and coding process** to increase system efficiency and lower health care costs.
- Joined with leaders from Minnesota's largest health care organizations to announce an **electronic health information exchange** that will connect doctors, hospitals and

clinics across health care systems so they can quickly access medical records needed for patient treatment during a medical emergency or for delivering routine care. The Minnesota Health Information Exchange will improve patient safety, increase efficiency among health care providers, and reduce administrative costs for all health care organizations.

- Proposed giving all Minnesotans access to an **online personal health portfolio** by 2011. As the first step, the Governor has directed the Department of Finance and Employee Relations to seek proposals for a secure and portable online personal health portfolio for each of the state's approximately 50,000 employees in 2009.
- As a result of better than expected trends with the Minnesota Advantage Health Plan, the Governor directed DFER to establish a **Health Reimbursement Account** of up to \$250 for state employees. The creation of a new debit card will also help state employees better manage their existing Flexible Spending Accounts.

Higher Education

Under the Pawlenty Administration, the state's higher education institutions are focusing on alignment with business needs.

- Created **Centers of Excellence**, an innovation that will establish flagship programs within the state colleges and universities that build on regional economic strengths such as manufacturing technology, science, engineering, and health care. The initiative stimulates system focus and campus differentiation.
- Announced a goal to have **25 percent of all credits** at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities **earned through online courses** by 2015. In the last academic year, 9.2 percent of all registered credits at MnSCU colleges and universities were through online courses.
- Proposed and established a **new higher-education institution** in Rochester, the **University of Minnesota-Rochester**, with an emphasis on medicine, business and technology.
- Proposed and funded the new **Minnesota Partnership for Biotechnology and Medical Genomics**, an innovative partnership between the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic and Hospital.
- Ensured **more accountability in higher education** by establishing for the first time a Director for the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, appointed by the Governor.
- **ACHIEVE**: Secured funding for new scholarship program that provides scholarship money for higher education to high school students who take rigorous courses.

- **Investment in Infrastructure:** Signed into law over \$730 million in bonding for Higher Education infrastructure.
- Established a **performance bonus program** based on measureable outcomes at the University of Minnesota and MnSCU.
- Passed the **Minnesota GI Bill**, part of the Governor's Military and Veterans Support Package, to provide postsecondary education benefits to returning veterans and the spouses and children of veterans who have been severely disabled or killed in action.

K-12 Education

Governor Pawlenty is focused on preparing Minnesota's students for the 21st century economy through tougher standards and increased accountability.

- **Quality Compensation for Teachers** – created and passed a nation-leading performance pay reform called **Q Comp**, linking teacher compensation to classroom and student achievement, rather than just seniority.
- Reorganized, renamed, and refocused the **Minnesota Department of Education** on its core mission.
- Signed a **\$800 million increase for K-12 education** in 2005, the largest state infusion of money into K-12 education in Minnesota history.
- Repealed the Profile of Learning and created the **Minnesota Academic Standards**, with new, more rigorous graduation requirements.
- **Increased educational rigor** by requiring students to take Algebra I by 8th grade and Algebra II and Chemistry or Physics to graduate from high school.
- Expanded rigorous course taking and earning of college credit while in High School through **Get Ready, Get Credit**. Get Ready provides school districts with ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) which assesses student preparation for post-secondary education in the eighth and tenth grades. Get Credit allows high school students to gain college credit and saves parents money in future tuition fees by taking Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate programs, or by passing a College Level Exam Program (CLEP) test.
- Began a **science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)** initiative that has multiple components geared to encourage students to take more STEM course work, explore STEM fields and careers and be prepared for a globally competitive world.
- Established **school report cards** to inform parents of school standing/status and student performance.

- Developed a funding formula for **online learning**, adding another school choice option for Minnesota public and non-public students.
- Directed the Minnesota Department of Education to develop a **Mandarin Chinese language program**, recognizing the importance of China in the global economy.
- Attracted a **Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP)** charter school to Minnesota to provide rigor and college preparation.
- Signed legislation requiring the **Pledge of Allegiance** in Minnesota's public schools.
- Provided one-time payments to schools to help with increasing energy costs.
- Provided an additional \$13 million for **dual enrollment high school programs** like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and College in the Schools.
- Proposed and signed into law \$6 million in **scholarships for at-risk pre-kindergartners** to prepare these children for kindergarten.
- Created 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.
- Minnesota has the **highest average ACT test scores** in the nation of states where substantial numbers of students take the test.
- Minnesota ranks first in the nation in the **percentage of residents over age 25 with a high school diploma** (93 percent), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention

The Pawlenty Administration has tackled the mortgage foreclosure crisis head on.

- **Mortgage foreclosure prevention initiatives** include expanded foreclosure counseling workshops held around the state, the creation of a compact with lenders, mediation funding to assist homeowners when counseling is unsuccessful, and a new Commerce Department assistance hotline for counselors.
- The state received a \$4.3 million federal grant, the second-largest such grant made to any state, to **expand foreclosure prevention counseling**.
- **Additional notice** will be provided to homeowners regarding counseling services and requires the lender to provide a contact name and number of someone who has authority to negotiate the loan.

- Renters in a multi-tenant building can now **jointly pay** their building's utility bills when the landlord is past due or is facing foreclosure. This ensures that renters will not have their utilities shut off.
- **Analysis of foreclosure issues** will be improved through better data collection. The Secretary of State will convene a statewide foreclosure data collection group to study the most efficient way to develop and implement an electronic system for submission, collection, assessment and retrieval of statewide foreclosure data.
- **Neighborhood blight will be reduced** by amending current law for the determination of when a property is abandoned, allowing abandoned properties to get back on the market sooner.
- The predatory lending law is clarified and strengthened to **help prevent subprime lending abuses, negative amortization, fraud and other problem lending practices** that contribute to the increase in foreclosures.

Natural Resources and the Environment

The Pawlenty Administration has protected more lands and waters than ever before while assuring their continued beneficial use.

- Proposed and passed Minnesota's largest-ever **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)** agreement, setting aside 120,000 acres of marginal crop land near environmentally sensitive waterways by 2007 and providing \$23 million in funding. These dollars plus future state spending will trigger approximately \$200 million in federal funds to fund the largest CREP program ever. CREP provides significant water quality, water storage and soil erosion and wildlife benefits through partnerships with the federal, state, and local governments and private landowners.
- Improved the operation of the Minnesota Lottery and increased revenue to the **Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**.
- Reformed the make-up of the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources to include **citizen members** to ensure investments from the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund are used to **better protect, conserve, preserve and enhance Minnesota's natural resources**.
- Accelerated the protection and restoration of **prairie wetland complexes** and implemented a comprehensive wetland monitoring program.
- Expanded **shoreland habitat management** by working with local governments, lake associations and home owners.

- Directed the Metropolitan Council to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure that an **adequate, secure supply of drinking water** is available to meet the long-term needs of the seven-county area.
- Signed into law Minnesota's Clean Water Act and **provided funding to restore and protect our lakes, rivers and streams.**
- Reduced mercury deposition into our lakes and rivers by proposing and signing into law **Mercury Emissions Reduction legislation** to reduce mercury emitted by the state's largest power plants by 90% by 2015.
- Improved management of **Off Highway Vehicle use** in Minnesota through training, certification, enforcement and funding.
- Allowed for managed use of **All Terrain Vehicle trails** to protect the environment, while preserving Minnesotans' ability to enjoy the outdoors.
- Established the **Conservation Legacy Council** which calls for reform of conservation funding and governance.
- Created one of the **largest conservation projects** in state history, protecting 51,000 acres of forest through a public-private partnership.

Public Safety

The Pawlenty Administration has passed tough laws dealing with sex offenders, the meth scourge and other issues.

- Issued an executive order requiring the use of **E-Verify** for newly hired employees in the executive branch and requiring certification of compliance with federal immigration laws for state contract vendors and employers receiving business subsidies.
- Issued an executive order directing several state agencies to work with federal officials as part of the **Agreement of Cooperation in Communities to Enhance Safety and Security (ACCESS)** program. ACCESS includes Immigration Cross-Designation for state law enforcement officers, participation in a program to identify criminal aliens who are incarcerated within the state, and a task force that targets identity theft and fraud in the immigration process.
- Required that legal resident aliens have their **visa expiration dates** printed on driver licenses.
- **Credit cards may now be used to pay costs** associated with fines and court proceedings. Court operations will also be improved through the electronic transfer of information between law enforcement and court offices.

- The **Natural Disaster Assistance Procedures** bill creates a framework for all state agencies to use when responding to natural disasters and specifies the types of aid that communities and individuals can expect from the state.
- Passed the **most comprehensive crime bill** in Minnesota history. Components include:
 - Aggressive restrictions on the retail sale of the materials used to make **methamphetamine**; tough new penalties for meth offenders, plus additional resources, including 10 Bureau of Criminal Apprehension agents to enforce meth laws; and strict new standards to clean up meth sites.
 - Ground-breaking standards and resources for tracking, supervising and punishing **sex offenders**, including life in prison for the worst offenders, with no possibility of release.
 - Dramatic increase in funding for the **Financial Crimes Task Force** to fight identity theft and other serious financial crimes.
- Supported **uniform statewide system for law-abiding citizens to carry handguns**, including standardized training and background checks.
- Secured more than \$15 million to **supervise, track, and apprehend sex offenders**.
- **Put prisoners to work** cleaning Minnesota's roads each spring as part of Operation Clean-Up.
- Provided more than \$200 million for **guards, staff and additional prison and commitment space** to lock up sex offenders and dangerous persons.
- Proposed and signed into law **longer sentences for all categories of sex offenders** with new sentencing guidelines, including life in prison without release for the worst sex offenders. The next level of offenders receiving life sentence won't be released unless they are successfully treated and are no longer dangerous.
- \$1 million to create a **child pornography investigative unit** at the Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension that will investigate tips and conduct sting operations.
- A list of all **non-compliant predatory offenders** has been posted on the Internet so the public will be aware of offenders who have failed to comply with terms of their release.
- **Stepping in to assist with public safety in the state's largest city**, \$1.5 million was targeted for increased police patrols in Minneapolis.

- Consumers are now able to **safeguard their financial information** by placing a freeze on their credit report to prevent identity fraud. Personal information will be protected by new penalties against unauthorized computer hacking.
- Signed legislation to enhance penalties against those involved in **human trafficking** with enhanced penalties when the trafficking involves minors.
- Funded **50 more Minnesota State Troopers** on our roads and promoted safety as a part of the 2:00 a.m. bar closing law.
- Improved the **preparedness of first responders** by funding interoperable radio that enables law enforcement, EMS, and other emergency response personnel to communicate.
- Responsibly **addressed increasing inmate populations** by introducing double-bunking at certain prisons and funding a major expansion of the Faribault prison.
- Improved **prison efficiency** by reducing the number of inmate meals on weekends and consolidating prison administrative functions to eliminate duplication.
- Introduced America's most **secure, tamper-resistant driver's licenses**, greatly improving the integrity of Minnesota's primary identification document.
- Expanded the **911 Public Safety Radio System** statewide enabling first responders to communicate and coordinate their responses across jurisdictions
- Increased funding by \$6.2 million for **victims of crime**, including reparations and the automated victim information notification system (VINE).
- Provided 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.
- **Added ten new judgeships** with \$8.2 million, enabling Minnesota's court system to better handle rising caseloads and expand capacity to handle cases in a timely manner. Three judges were 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.
- **Enhanced offender supervision** with \$8 million for additional agents to monitor more than 131,000 offenders and additional community-based sex offender treatment.
- Expanded **Youth Intervention Programs** with \$1.5 million in new funding.
- Provided **\$157 million in disaster relief** for southeastern Minnesota residents and businesses affected by floods.

Quality of Life

Under Governor Pawlenty's leadership, Minnesota leads the nation in healthiness, voter participation and a number of quality of life measures.

- Procedures have been **streamlined for absentee voting** by military members and Minnesota residents living overseas.
- Insurance companies now have additional legal obligations to act in “**good faith**” when responding to a claim made by the insured under certain types of insurance policies.
- A **High-Speed Broadband Task Force** was created to identify areas in the state that lack infrastructure to support broadband service. The task force will also develop a comprehensive plan to achieve a statewide high-speed broadband goal.
- Insurance companies and agents must annually notify homeowners if their insurance policy does not include **flood coverage**. The required notice will also remind homeowners that they have the right to purchase flood insurance if they so choose.
- The “**Hannah Montana Bill**” prohibits persons from using, possessing, or selling software that interferes with internet ticket sales.
- **Protected Minnesotans constitutional rights** against government taking property by signing eminent domain reform legislation. The law restricts the seizure of homes and businesses by government for economic development.
- Implemented a nation-leading plan to **end chronic homelessness** with \$79 million in additional funding for permanent supportive housing and services.

Tax Relief

Targeted tax reductions proposed and signed into law by Governor Pawlenty are helping homeowners, veterans, businesses and others.

- Nearly **\$800 million in total tax reductions** signed into law by Governor Pawlenty.
- Proposed and signed a **three-year local property tax cap** in 2008. Cities and counties will be limited to an increase of 3.9 percent, or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower, per year with allowances for special conditions such as population growth and public safety. Governor Pawlenty's property tax cap and related relief is projected to save taxpayers \$78.5 million in 2009 and \$460.5 million over the next three years.

- Property tax relief of \$21 million in FY 2010, \$25 million in FY 2011, and \$25 million each year thereafter through an **enhanced property tax refund program** which provides direct relief to homeowners.
- **Tax credits for veterans and military personnel** of up to a \$750 credit for disabled veterans or military service members with at least 20 years of service, and a doubling of the Military Combat Zone tax credit. In addition, military pay for training and drills will no longer be counted as taxable income.
- Adopted **federal conformity provisions** for individual and business taxpayers, a net income tax decrease of \$7.4 million in FY 2008-09 and \$11.5 million in FY 2010-11.
- Authorized **reduced property tax classifications** for qualifying non-profit community service-oriented organizations and small resorts.
- **Eliminated the marriage penalty in Minnesota's tax code** and conformed to federal law, cutting taxes by \$28.7 million. The change affected about 419,300 married couples.
- Cut taxes by \$23.8 million by **reducing Alternative Minimum Tax liability** for 44,300 Minnesotans. Approximately 82.5% of projected AMT returns that would have liability under current law would have no AMT liability under the new law, an average tax reduction of \$540.
- Led efforts to facilitate a **Medtronic expansion** by helping to secure land and funding for public infrastructure for a new facility. Estimates forecast the creation of 2,000 jobs, averaging \$70,000 in salary per year. This cardiac division will be the largest Medtronic campus in the world.

Transportation

The Pawlenty Administration has supported the largest transportation expansion in state's history and will continue to support innovative efforts to expand and improve our roads and infrastructure.

- Proposed and implemented \$900 million in critical state highway and bridge projects authorized in the 2003 transportation bill – the **largest infusion of transportation funding** in Minnesota's history.
 - Package financed 20 major projects more than a cumulative 70 years ahead of schedule.
 - Included in that package were improvements to Highways 14, 212, 494, 169, 10, 34, 371, and 53. Improvements to “Unweave the Weave” (694/35E) and Crosstown/35W are underway.
 - \$40 million in eligible transit advantage projects.
 - \$100 million in state highway safety and preservation projects

- Proposed and supported **constitutional dedication of the motor vehicle sales tax**. The MVST dedication is the equivalent of a 9-cent gas tax increase.
- Created the **MnPASS** system, Minnesota's first-ever congestion pricing system, using state-of-the-art electronic technology, to help relieve traffic congestion in the Twin Cities.
- Funded investment in **six Twin Cities transitways**: Northstar Commuter Rail Line, Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Corridor, Central Corridor, Red Rock Commuter Rail Corridor, Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit Corridor, and Northwest Corridor Bus Rapid Transit.
- Provided \$117.8 million in funding for **local roads and bridges**, while ensuring that local governments have expanded access to funds for roads associated with high-traffic agricultural facilities.
- Invested **more than \$3 billion in major highway construction projects** since 2003.
- In construction year 2005 – 200 active projects with total value of \$1.7 billion
- In construction year 2006 – 170 active projects with total value of \$1.5 billion.
- **Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA)**: \$133.3 million in federal funds awarded to the Twin Cities to be spent by late 2009. The UPA advances regional and local transportation plans:
 - I-35W and Cedar Avenue BRT park & rides and transit stations
 - Access Minneapolis Plan – Double width bus lanes on Marquette & 2nd Avenue in support of downtown transit plan
 - I-35 W and Cedar Avenue BRT projects
 - Regional Park & Ride Plan – implementing expansion sooner than previously planned
- **Hybrid Buses – Metro Transit Go Greener** – In fall 2007, Metro Transit took delivery of 19 hybrid electric buses, the first of 169 that will be added to its fleet over the next five years. These buses get 22 percent better mileage and produce 90 percent lower emissions than the vehicles they replace. For its conventional diesel buses, Metro Transit made the switch in August from a 5 percent biodiesel fuel to a 10 percent blend and will go to a 20 percent blend in the summer months starting in 2008.

Veterans and Military

The Pawlenty Administration strongly supports our military members and their families and seeks to recognize the dedication and sacrifices they have made for our country through our actions.

- The **Proud to be a Veteran License Plate** is now authorized for motorcycle use and allows the current funds from the sale of these plates to be used for veterans programming.
- **Civil court proceedings will be stayed** for the business owned by a National Guard or other military reserve member who has been ordered into any type of active military service for 60 or more consecutive days.
- Minnesota law is changed to allow a **promotion in rank** in the event a member is killed in action before they have attained ten years of service in the National Guard.
- Families of service members are now **protected from being discharged** from employment based on their spouse serving in the military.
- The Minnesota **GI Bill** is modified and increases the annual award for qualified service members from \$2,000 to \$3,000.
- **Property tax relief is increased for disabled veterans** with 70 percent or more disability. In addition, a new hardship property tax assessment deferral is now available to members of the National Guard and Reserves in active service.
- Governor Pawlenty signed a bill officially recognizing July 27 as **Korean War Armistice Day** in Minnesota to acknowledge the value and sacrifice of Minnesota veterans who fought in Korea.
- **Vietnam Veterans Day** was officially established as March 29. There were 1,072 Minnesotans killed in action in Vietnam.
- A new **business assistance program** for military reservists is created, authorizing the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to make loans of up to \$20,000 per borrower.
- Land in Jay Cooke State Park is being transferred to the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs for development of a **new state veterans cemetery**, in order to provide additional dignified burial places and a lasting memorial for veterans and their families, especially those in northeastern Minnesota. Minnesota law was also modified to authorize any future state veterans cemetery, if needed.
- **The County Veterans Service Officer Working Group** is created to review the findings and recommendations of the 2008 report of the Office of the Legislative Auditor on Minnesota's county veterans service offices.

- The executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government must report on **employment, recruitment, retention, and retirement of veterans** in their non-elected workforce for FY 2008.
- Created the **Veterans Health Care Advisory Council** to provide advice on quality long-term care and the anticipated future needs of Minnesota veterans.
- Secured \$250,000 for to improve service of the **veterans claims office** by funding additional staff, travel, and training.
- Provided \$2.5 million in FY 09 and \$1.5 million each year thereafter for the **State Soldiers Assistance Program** (SSAP) that provides cash assistance for shelter payments, utilities, and personal needs for veterans who are unable to work as a result of temporary disability.
- Provided an additional \$500,000 to meet current **County Veterans Service Office grant requests** that enhance benefits, programs, and services provided to veterans, giving priority to outreach, reintegration of combat veterans and reducing homelessness among veterans.
- Signed into law \$720,000 a year to continue the operation of **LinkVet**, the toll-free customer service line that provides veterans with information referrals, immediate crisis intervention and psychological counseling 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition, LinkVet case workers will now be available to coordinate benefits and needs of veterans, military members and their families.
- Courts must now inquire about a **defendant's military status and history** at sentencing. If a defendant convicted of a crime is a veteran and has been diagnosed with a mental illness, the court may consider local treatment options.
- Enacted historic funding for **members of military service**, providing:
 - **100% tuition reimbursement** for members of the National Guard.
 - Substantial **bonuses for re-enlistees**.
 - Special fund to assist military families and veterans through **“Support our Troops” license plates**.
- Funded a long-overdue memorial to **Minnesota's World War II** veterans.
- Proposed and signed into law legislation providing a **tax credit** for Minnesota soldiers serving in combat, helping veterans reintegrate, providing **in-state tuition**, on-campus **assistance centers** and **college credit** for military training. Families of military personnel will also be able to take up to ten days off from work to care for injured soldiers.
- Provided \$6 million to **improve operations at the Minneapolis Veterans Home** and to provide for upgrades at other veterans homes around the state.

- Created the **Military and Veterans Support Cabinet** and ordered all state agencies to review their policies to help veterans.
- 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** provides \$1.5 million for reintegration efforts for deployed service members.
- **Increased 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 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** received \$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.
- **Ensuring firearms certification** for returning veterans who work in occupations such as police officer, game warden, correctional official, or private security guard.
- The **Minnesota GI Bill** provides postsecondary education benefits to returning veterans and the spouses and children of veterans who have been severely disabled or killed in action.
- Increased **funding to Veterans Organizations** by \$250,000 to increase their ability to sponsor events and provide services to veterans.
- Provided \$200,000 in essential **information architecture** for the Department of Veteran Affairs to keep pace with the needs of current veterans
- Provided for preservation and maintenance of the **state veteran cemetery** in Little Falls.
- Provided the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard **greater authority to grant bonus incentives** to maintain a strong National Guard.

- **Established a State Achievement Ribbon** to recognize excellence in support of the state.
- Established **free hunting and fishing license** for 24 months following a deployment.
- Provides for **free day passes at State parks** for service members while on military leave.
- Provides \$500,000 for **Veterans Rest Camp** on Big Marine Lake.
- Provides **consumer protection for deploying service members**. The cold weather rules for utility shut off apply to service member families while deployed. Service members can cancel cell phone contracts and stop service contracts or rental agreements without penalty upon mobilization or move.
- Qualifying veterans and their families qualify for up to 12 months of **MinnesotaCare premiums paid** by the state within 24 months of their deployment. Service members must meet needs rules for MinnesotaCare program.
- **High School transcripts** are provided at no cost to soldiers on duty.
- Transferred control of the five Veterans Homes to the Department of Veterans Affairs to **ensure accountability and quality care** for veterans and their families.
- **Veteran-owned small businesses** will now receive a preference when bidding on most state agency contracts. Veterans will also receive a higher preference when applying for state employment by requiring the top 5 veteran applicants be granted an interview.
- A new **Gold Star license plate** is created for the surviving spouse or parent of a person who dies while serving honorably in active service. Gold Star family members will not pay a fee for the new plates.