



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

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

May 25, 2010

The Honorable Senator James Metzen  
President of the Senate  
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
322 State Capitol Building  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear President Metzen:

I write to inform you that Chapter 386, Senate File 251 has been vetoed. Although return of the bill to the house of origin and a veto message are not required because the Legislature has adjourned *sine die*, I wanted to share my concerns about this bill with the Legislature.

This bill would redefine the statutory definition of "motor vehicle" to include the trailer in a semi tractor-trailer combination, thereby exposing the owner of the trailer to tort liability for driver negligence.

This definitional change has sweeping legal implications that would upset established precedent, raise the cost of transporting goods during a recession, and threatens to disrupt the free flow of interstate commerce.

Trailer owners have little or no control over the driver and therefore should not be held responsible for their negligent acts. Currently, no other state has adopted this type of policy and Minnesota should not be an outlier.

Any statutory change in this area should be the product of stakeholder compromise that fairly and equitably balances competing interests. This legislation is severely imbalanced and is therefore vetoed.

Sincerely,

  
Tim Pawlenty  
Governor

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cc: Representative Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker of the House  
Senator Lawrence J. Pogemiller, Majority Leader  
Senator David Senjem, Minority Leader  
Senator Don Betzold  
Representative Kurt Zellers, Minority Leader  
Representative Mary Liz Holberg  
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