



## Statement from Tina Smith

Thank you Governor Dayton.

I accept this appointment, and it will be my great honor to serve Minnesota as United States Senator.

Though I never anticipated this moment, I am resolved to do everything I can to move Minnesota forward. I will be a fierce advocate in the United States Senate for economic opportunity and fairness.

This is a difficult moment for us. But even now, I am filled with optimism for Minnesota – this big, welcoming, diverse, and resilient place that has been my home for over thirty years.

As Lt. Governor, I have travelled everywhere in Minnesota. Being elected Lt. Governor is like being invited into Minnesota's living room. I've talked to people in their homes, at their jobs, at city halls and their places of worship. We've talked about what worries them, what scares them and what gives them hope. I have learned a lot.

Minnesota has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, but I have heard stories from families who work two full time jobs and still can't find a good place to live.

Minnesota has some of the best schools, but I have talked to Moms faced with driving 60 miles each day to get their child to a good preschool.

Minnesota has more people with health insurance than almost any other state, yet I have talked to farmers who have lost access to their longtime doctors and can't afford their health insurance premiums.

Minnesota's iron ore built this country, yet I've talked to Rangers worried about the future of their beloved home towns.

Minnesota is often named one of the best states for women, yet even here, women still earn less than men, and women of color and Native American women have even fewer opportunities.

We have much opportunity in this state and this country. And we have much work to do, to make sure this opportunity is broadly shared.

Paul Wellstone said often, "We all do better when we all do better." I will serve Minnesota in the Senate guided by these words, and with these Minnesota stories in mind.

Just over three years ago we re-elected Senator Franken with a mandate to work hard to improve people's lives.

With his decision to step down, it is the responsibility of our Governor to appoint a person to fill this vacant seat in the Senate.

Now my job will be go to Washington to continue working on behalf of Minnesotans, and our country.

I will do this in my own way, using my own best judgment and experience, but always with Minnesotans in mind.

But it is up to Minnesotans to decide for themselves who they want to complete Senator Franken's term. They will make this decision in a special election next November.

I will run in that election, and I will do my best to earn Minnesotans' support. I believe the way to do that is by being the best Senator I can be.

I thank Senator Franken for his service. He has been a champion for our state, and I know he and Franni will continue to contribute to our state and country.

I also want to thank Senator Franken's excellent staff in Washington, D.C. and here in Minnesota for your work to help Minnesotans, in thousands of ways. This work continues, and we still need you.

I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve with Governor Mark Dayton. I have seen how Mark brings integrity, heart, and a passion for justice to his job. He is an exceptional leader, and I'm proud to have served with him.

The men and women in our office, and the 34,000 people who serve in state government, are some of the best, most dedicated public servants I have ever known. I have loved this job, and I have been proud to call you colleagues.

My family is with me today. My husband Archie, our sons Mason and Sam. Their wives and our daughters Julia and Emily. I am proud of you, I love you, thank you for your love and support.

Finally, I want to thank the people of Minnesota, for the opportunity to have served you here at the State Capitol, and for your support and encouragement, as I become your Senator. The Governor keeps a sign on the wall in his office that says, "None of us is as smart as all of us." I will take my own version of this sign with me to Washington D.C., as a reminder of the wisdom of my fellow Minnesotans.

This Senate seat has a strong, abiding legacy of service and social justice that runs back to Paul Wellstone, Walter Mondale, Gene McCarthy and Hubert Humphrey. As I take on this new position, in this extraordinary time we are in, I will do my best to move this legacy forward, toward a better, more inclusive and more just future for all of us.

Thank you.