



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

May 23, 2018

The Honorable Michelle Fischbach  
President of the Senate  
2113 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Madame President:

I have vetoed and am returning Chapter 201, SF 3656, the omnibus supplemental budget bill.

Repeatedly over the past several months, I implored the Legislature to send separate bills on Minnesotans' most urgent priorities. We agreed that we must reform elder care, address the opioid epidemic, and ensure safe schools for our children. Yet instead of coming together to find shared solutions to these critical issues, you have deposited them into a 989 page budget bill, with 51 policy provisions, which I oppose. This legislative gamesmanship was terrible, and I will not sign the result.

Despite efforts over the past several months to strengthen existing elder abuse laws, this bill fails to meet the expectations of a large number of lawmakers and of the coalition of nearly every consumer advocacy organization in the state working to stop elder abuse. This legislation does not ensure that there will ever be licensure or protections for assisted living or dementia care. It provides no private rights of enforcement for elderly and vulnerable adults who suffer preventable harm or even death at a long-term care facility. It fails to provide even the basic public right of action protections for elderly people being evicted from their care setting and residence. In fact, advocacy groups believe changes made in this bill would actually make current law less protective. This failure is unacceptable.

The bill also does far too little to combat the opioid epidemic plaguing our State. Several months ago, I proposed investing over \$12 million annually in high impact strategies to treat and prevent opioid abuse, funded through an Opioid Stewardship Fee that would hold partially accountable the pharmaceutical companies, who created this deadly epidemic. Instead, this bill spends only \$7 million in FY 2019 and about \$10 million in FY20/21, entirely from the General Fund. Not one penny is ascribed to the drug companies, through either a "penny-a-pill" or a licensing fee. Evidently, the industry's 32 lobbyists and whatever promises they made outweighed the interests of the people of Minnesota.

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The bill does not support a comprehensive approach and instead provides one-time grants and a small rate increase to providers. There is no funding targeted to communities of color or tribal communities that have been devastated by this crisis. The disparities between tribal communities and communities of color and white residents are the highest in the United States. You could have and should have done more.

Included in this enormous bill are workable responses to problems that I sincerely hoped would become law: school safety and HAVA funds. I was sincere in my oft-stated desire to work with you and make these provisions become law. However, you knowingly prevented their enactment by inserting them into a bill, containing policies and agency budget cuts that I had said I would not sign

I made my objections to this bill very clear throughout the Session. My Administration sent you over 100 detailed letters throughout the session, carefully explaining my concerns with each of the proposals.

This terrible bill and the resulting veto are your creations. Never have I seen a legislative session so badly mismanaged, less transparent, and more beholden to monied special interests.

For the above reasons, I have vetoed this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Dayton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mark Dayton  
Governor

cc: Senator Paul E. Gazelka, Senate Majority Leader  
Senator Thomas Bakk, Senate Minority Leader  
Senator Julie Rosen, Chief Senate Author  
Speaker Kurt Daudt, Speaker of the House  
Representative Melissa Hortman, House Minority Leader  
Representative Jim Knobloch, Chief House Author  
The Honorable Steve Simon, Secretary of the State  
Mr. Cal Ludeman, Secretary of the Senate  
Mr. Patrick Murphy, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives  
Mr. Paul Marinac, Revisor of Statutes