



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

116 Veterans Service Building ♦ 20 West 12th Street ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

May 21, 2015

The Honorable Kurt Daudt
Speaker of the House
463 State Office Building
100 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have vetoed and am returning to you Chapter 72, House File 844, a bill related to education finance.

As I have said before, the bill's total investment of \$400 million is insufficient given the state's large surplus. In 2013, with a projected budget *deficit* of \$627 million, the spending increase above the base for E-12 education was \$606 million. It is astonishing that with a \$1.9 billion surplus, and more than \$1 billion left on the bottom for future tax cuts, there would be less invested in our schools this year. And it is incomprehensible that estate tax cuts for millionaires and property tax relief for large corporations are higher priorities for your House Republican Caucus than investing adequately in our students and young children.

This bill omits the following funding, which I specified in my May 15th email to you and Senator Bakk (copy attached).

- No funding for eliminating the waiting list of 2500 low-income children for Head Start.
- No funding for the Northside Achievement Zone and St. Paul Promise Neighborhood.
- No funding for Bureau of Indian Education schools and only meager funding for American Indian students.
- No funding for Special Education.
- No funding for English Learning programs.
- No funding for free breakfasts for prekindergarten and first graders.
- No funding for Regional Centers which help our most struggling schools improve.

Also unacceptable is the absence of any version of voluntary, universal prekindergarten which will help 47,000 4-year olds, which has been my number one priority in this session. Despite my willingness to move from full-day to half-day prekindergarten, and despite my urging that we take a comprehensive approach to educating young children, your bill neglects the opportunity to make transformational changes for our 4-year olds.

Throughout this session, I have heard passionate rhetoric from your members about the urgent need to close the achievement gap. This bill belies that rhetoric, and instead chooses to shortchange our youngest students for future tax cuts.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Dayton". The signature is stylized with a large, looping "M" and a cursive "Dayton".

Mark Dayton
Governor

Attachment

cc: Senator Sandra Pappas, President of the Senate
Senator Tom Bakk, Senate Majority Leader
Senator David Hann, Senate Minority Leader
Senator Charles Wiger
Representative Paul Thissen, House Minority Leader
Representative Jenifer Loon
The Honorable Steve Simon, Secretary of State
Ms. Joanne Zoff, Secretary of the Senate
Mr. Patrick Murphy, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives
Michele Timmons, Revisor of Statutes