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# STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
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SAINT PAUL 55155

ARNE H. CARLSON  
GOVERNOR

May 19, 1997

The Honorable Allan Spear  
President of the Senate  
120 Capitol  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear President Spear:

I have vetoed and am returning Chapter 168, Senate File 1170, a bill which would allow certain minors to vote and be elected as delegates and officers at precinct caucuses.

Currently, 17 year-olds are able to vote and be elected as delegates and officers at precinct caucuses, provided they meet one simple and appropriate test -- that they will be 18 years of age at the time of the general elections. This is a fair and simple requirement for this type of participation in the caucuses, which have a considerable impact on the selection of candidates and adoption of platforms.

Under this bill, an ineligible voter would be able to directly influence -- and ultimately deny -- the selection of candidates in either party. This is a responsibility best left to mature eligible voters and goes well beyond simply increasing a young person's interest and participation in the political process. It also does nothing to improve the system, which desperately needs the participation of more voting age citizens from all points of the political spectrum.

I strongly encourage young people to actively participate in our political process. Current law allows them to do this without upsetting the carefully determined age of electorate maturity.

Warmest regards,

ARNE H. CARLSON  
Governor

- c: Senator Roger Moe, Majority Leader
- Senator Dean Johnson, Minority Leader
- Representative Phil Carruthers, Speaker of the House
- Representative Steve Sviggum, Minority Leader
- Chief Senate Author(s)
- Chief House Author(s)
- Mr. Patrick E. Flahaven, Secretary of the Senate
- Mr. Edward A. Burdick, Chief Clerk of the House
- Ms. Joan Anderson Growe, Secretary of State