



Thank you.

You know, I was down speaking in Austin, Minnesota, a week or so ago, a couple weeks ago, to the Austin High School, and I asked them, I said, "You know, I'm assuming this office, and all during the campaign I never used a note, I never had a prepared speech, ever," and I asked those high school kids in Austin, "Should I change?" And they said, "Absolutely not."

They told me we want to hear from your heart and we want to hear from your soul, so that's what you're going to get today. I'm not changing.

I want to offer a thank you to Federal Judge Paul Magnuson; Governor and Susan Carlson—a job well done—the State of Minnesota owes you a debt of gratitude.

To all the distinguished guests here today, to my campaign committee, I won't name them today, but for everyone that did work on the campaign, we shocked the world. We really did.

To my wife, Terry; my daughter, Jade; my son, Tyrel -they're riding along on another one of dad's escapades, and we're not done yet. And I do owe them a thank you, because they're always there for me, no matter what it is I decide I'm going to try next, they're always there with full support, and they'll continue to be there, and I just hope that this doesn't change their lives too much, that they can go on being who they are and who I love them for.

I want to thank all my friends, family, the people of Minnesota who put me here, it's a great honor. They've bestowed on to me the highest job you can have in the State of Minnesota.

And as I said it on election night, certainly I'll make mistakes, but rest assured, I will do the best job I possibly can to the best of my ability. And I think that's—I think that's all we ask of anyone in life, do your best.

I know when I coached football at Champlin Park High School, the young men that I worked with there, I always tell them I will never, ever punish you for losing, but God help you if you quit on me. Because there is a difference between losing and quitting. Someone will always lose, but if you quit, you can't go home and look yourself in the mirror.

I also want to thank today my former teammates, many of who are here, and when I say teammates, yes, the United States Navy, which I spent four glorious years of my life, the Navy Honor Guard, Color Guard up here, as well as the other Navy teammates of mine sitting throughout the audience.

It was a time in my life that created who I am today. It really and truly did.

I want to thank my mother and father, who are there watching today at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. And I can tell right now that the ground's heating up a little bit where they're at. Because I think today, most of all, my mom and dad would look down and say I can't believe it. Look what he's done now.

But, you know, there's a lot of questions that go on. Is Jesse Ventura up to governing? Can Jesse Ventura do the job? Well, I told you I was going to come here today and I was going to speak from the heart. Well, not totally true, I have to read something. And, yes, when you get 47, these become a part of your uniform.

But I received this just a little while ago, and it says a lot to me. And so for all you people out there that might have questions on whether I can succeed, questions whether I can do a good job at this huge task, the big shoes I have to follow in, the row of them sitting there in the second row that have come before me.



I received this yesterday and it said, "I'm sure you must be nervous and apprehensive and maybe a little frightened by such a huge and challenging endeavor. But keep this in mind, you've been there, you've been pushed, tried and tested by the best. And you've passed with flying colors. Keep that 'hooya' spirit and don't change a thing. I wish you the very best of luck and success. Sincerely, Master Chief Terry 'Mother' Moy."

So for any of you that have any doubts, he's standing to the left of me, and I'll behave. And it touched me a great deal, because as I move forward I know I can always look back to my Navy SEAL training when the going gets tough, and I know it's not as tough as that.

And that's what this is all about again, is simply doing your best. And as we move forward into the next four years, I send the message out to the Reform Party, to the Democrats, and to the Republicans, let's remember what took place in this last election, that we Minnesotans can be so proud of, and that is the fact that we had the highest voter turnout in the United States of America.

And that message was powerful because it brought back people who hadn't voted, it brought new, young voters out. And these new young people, this generation that came on board, and yes, might well have elected me, we must put down the partisan party politics and look at the bigger picture. We must look at the picture of these young people who have now come on board.

These young people who want to be part of the system, who want to vote and take part in the great thing we have here called the United States of America and the State of Minnesota.

So with that in mind, I want you all to remember, we cannot fail, we must not fail, because if we do we could lose this generation, and we dare not let that happen. Because you know there's publicity going all over the country now about Minnesota and its new governor, but in reality, the reality of the situation is, it's those young people, it's those disenfranchised voters that we've reached out to and brought back to the system. We have to keep striving and keep doing that. Because voting is a privilege, but it's also a civic duty. And it's a duty that many men, like you see throughout the crowd here, our military have spilled their blood and given their lives to protect that simple right, the right to vote.

So I challenge all Minnesotans. A little over 60 percent is nice, but I wrote it on a chalkboard to my chief of staff and said the next election, two years from now, I want no less than 70.

So that's—that's the challenge before us now. To keep these young people involved. To keep opening the arms of government and make it citizen friendly. To bring the people back to respecting their government.

And we had a group of citizens in here the other night talking about how do we keep them involved. These were first-time voters, these were people that haven't voted in five elections. And one main thing came out. They said honesty. Honesty. That's what we want. Don't tell us what we necessarily want to hear, we want honesty.

And I tell you today, that the one thing you'll get from Governor Jesse Ventura.

You may not always want to hear it, but you will get honesty. And I will continue to be honest for the next four years, and I will continue to lead with the best of my ability that I can possibly have to take Minnesota into the new millennium, because the movement is also much more centrist.



There's a movement out there, a central goal, to bring us all together, and always remember, let's do what's right for the people of Minnesota. We hold these jobs, state officials, with that in mind. We are up here to serve the people and do what's best for the State of Minnesota.

I know this is a speech, and if I've forgotten other people, I apologize, who should be recognized. My mother and father-in-law, Sharon and Gordy Larson, who always believed. My biggest fans.

But I'll finish today, because I'm not going to talk overly long, but I'll finish today again to remember this: We are all Minnesotans. That's the bottom line. Whether you're a Democrat, a Republican, a Reform Party, or whatever party you might be. We are all Minnesotans.

Now we move forward to do Minnesota's business and we will do it to the best of our ability.

Hooya.

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