

Thank you.

It's an honor to address the real movers and shakers behind Toronto's extraordinary success as a global competitor. As the Governor of Minnesota, I can tell you that *your* goals are *my* goals.

Toronto is truly the "world within a city."

- More than half your population is foreign-born - making this one of the world's most multi-cultural cities.
- Toronto is *connected*, with one of the best telecommunications networks in the world.
- You are Canada's gateway to international markets.
- And home to 90 percent of Canada's foreign banks.

I've always said: Go where the money is. And here I am!

Thanks to your efforts, and the efforts of people like you, Canada and the United States enjoy the largest bilateral trading relationship in the world. More than a billion dollars in merchandise trade crosses our borders *every day*.

Even more important, at least to me, is that Canada is Minnesota's largest trading partner. *By far*.

- Minnesota sold 2.4 billion in manufactured exports to Canada last year. That's more than we sold to our next three largest trading partners *combined*.

It's no wonder we do so much business together. For one thing, we share the longest unguarded border in the world, and there is a reason for that.

We share the same values, the same principles and ideals, and a long, rich history of friendship and cooperation.

We have nothing to fear, and *everything* to gain from each other.

It is a relationship we dare not and *do* not take for granted.

This is my second trade mission to Canada. Last year, we went to Saskatoon and accomplished a lot in a very short time. But this is *Canada*, and one visit just isn't enough. Our partnership is too important. The opportunities: boundless.

I'm pleased to know that Canada shares our commitment, and proved it by establishing a full-time consulate in Minneapolis more than 30 years ago. Consul General Susan Thompson, who is with us on our mission, has worked hard on behalf of our partnership, and is a good friend of Minnesota.

Thanks to Susan, I recently became the first Governor of Minnesota to visit your consulate. It was an honor and a privilege, not to mention long overdue. She even let me hold an Aboriginal talking stick during our news conference, which meant the Minnesota media jackals couldn't interrupt me.

It was a *very* pleasant experience.

I'm told the talking stick is an ancient tool used to bring people together, by making them actually listen to each other.

I could have used that talking stick during the last legislative session. But Minnesota and Canada have been listening to each other for years, and today, we're reaping the benefits of a dynamic relationship.

Consul General Thompson was recently quoted as saying: "We are neighbors by geography and partners by design," and I couldn't agree more. Our partnership succeeds because we *work at it*.

And I'm happy to say Minnesota's relationship with Ontario in trade, tourism and foreign investment, is flourishing.

In fact, Ontario is our best Canadian customer, buying more Minnesota's goods and services than any other province.

Last year, Minnesota exports to Ontario were valued at \$1.6 billion, that's more than we sold to the entire country of Japan, our second largest trading partner!

"Silicon Valley North," as this tech-smart city is known, made good use of Minnesota's high-tech products. Digital processing units, printed circuits and data processing components all ranked among our top ten exports.

Turn all this around, and Minnesota bought *just* as much from Ontario: \$1.6 billion. Which only proves we're a great match for each other!

The traffic across our border is just as heavy in the tourism trade. Once again, Ontario is *number one*, sending us more visitors than any other province. Nearly half a million Canadians visit Minnesota every year, making Minnesota the 10<sup>th</sup> most popular U.S. destination for Canadian travelers.

That's one reason I'm here. I'm trying to see if we might kick that into the single digits. After all, the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport serves more Canadian cities than any other U.S. airport. And Minnesota has everything to make you feel right at home: wonderful golf courses, lakes, live entertainment, cultural events and shopping.

Can you see why they call me "Jesse the Tourism Governor?"

I might add that we've also got one of the hottest baseball teams of the season. We all like to watch the Twins play the Blue Jays at Skydome. But you really ought to see their home games!

And that will become very easy to do this fall. Northwest Airlines just announced free stopovers in Minnesota on flights to the U.S. from Canada. So, we're looking forward to seeing even more of our Canadian friends this fall.

No doubt about it, much of the good will generated between Minnesota and Canada comes from the people we get to know and the companies we share. And Minnesota and Ontario share a lot of companies.

Our businesses employ thousands of people, help create healthy, vital communities, and fuel local economies on *both* sides of the border. Some of them even save lives.

- Companies like 3M and Medtronic have helped make Minnesota a global center for life-saving medical devices, and they're doing the same for Canada. Last year, Medtronic announced it was expanding its Canadian operation in order to get its pacemakers and other products to more patients in Ontario.
- Minnesota companies do more than just set up shop in Canada. They get *involved*. General Mills not only makes Canada's favorite cereal. It is also the official sponsor of the Canadian Olympic Association and "Team Cheerios" and the company ranks among Canada's top five contributors to the nation's food banks.

And the investment goes both ways.

Communities throughout Minnesota are benefiting from the company of Toronto-based businesses like:

- The Thomson Corporation
- Moore Corporation
- Norbord Industries
- and Celestica, the world's largest manufacturer of electronics.

Celestica is expanding even more in Rochester, Minnesota, where it now employs 1800 workers. The company plans to buy IBM's electronic card assembly and test operations, and hire another 700 people.

By working together, in trade, tourism and foreign investment, Minnesota and Ontario are fulfilling a common goal: to be global competitors.

We both know we can't rest on our laurels, no matter how successful we are. We must strive to lead the world by increasing exports, creating better jobs, and building even stronger, more diverse economies.

But we can't do it alone.

That's why our relationships, between governments, businesses and people, are so important. And that's why I'm here today.

Together, we can remove the barriers that cripple our ability to communicate, and compete.

As Governor, I've worked hard to break down those barriers.

- Last year, I urged Congress to support permanent normal trade relations with China, and the effort was a success. Just in time for my trade mission to China this fall.
- I'm not alone in believing that China is the number one marketing opportunity of the 21st century. Premier Harris has already been to China, and brought home a number of agreements.

Now you might think, as I did, that if anyone would oppose our trip to China, it would be the Dalai Lama.

But you would be *wrong*.

I met with the Dalai Lama during his recent visit to the Twin Cities, and was surprised to discover we had quite a bit in common.

I found out we share a similar view on engaging the world in order to spread free markets and free ideals. The Dalai Lama believes we cannot close our doors to those around us, and that we *must* develop relationships with the Chinese people and the Chinese government.

If we don't, we will not change minds. We will not open markets. We will not move forward.

- We must *continue* to move forward, and expand the benefits we have enjoyed under NAFTA . We need to urge our national governments to implement a Free

Trade Agreement of the Americas, so that our manufacturers can have better access to markets throughout our hemisphere.

- Minnesota exports to Canada have more than doubled since the 1989 Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. We need to be able to tap the same potential in Central and South America.

I'm sorry I couldn't meet with the Premier on this mission, but if I were in his shoes, I would be exactly where he is. In Moscow, promoting Toronto's bid for the 2008 Summer Olympics!

Now this is a man who knows what it takes to be a global competitor. I wish him the best of luck.

And I know that Premier Harris and I would have talked about ways we can strengthen the many partnerships that benefit Ontario and Minnesota:

- Like the Canada-U.S. Partnership, and its effort to make it easier to move goods, services and people across the border
- The Canadian Minnesota Business Council, which gives more than 100 companies a forum to share information and discuss important trade and economic issues.
- And the newly formed Northwest-Midwest Alliance, which just opened an office in Minneapolis to promote cross-border business expansions between northwestern Ontario and several midwestern states.

Minnesota and Ontario cooperate on issues ranging from education to energy to conservation of our shared natural resources, including Lake Superior!

And our people are close. Thunder Bay has not one, but two sister city relationships in Minnesota. One with Duluth, and the other with Little Canada, just north of the Twin Cities. Every year, Little Canada celebrates its connections and its heritage with "Canadian Days."

The city's Web site even displays a logo of Canada's maple leaf!

I've had a wonderful time in Toronto. This city, and its people, have a way of making me feel right at home. It could be your:

- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Well-educated, highly-skilled workforce
- And your strong, diverse economy

Or maybe it's that Toronto, like Minnesota, is accessible by land, by air and by sea, and that we both enjoy a quality of life that's hard to beat.

It could also be your golf courses, like Minnesota, there are so many to choose from!

There are many similarities. Toronto and Minnesota are both known for the movies we make and the high-tech companies we attract. Toronto is known as "Silicon Valley North." Minnesota is known as "Silicon Tundra."

Okay. We've got to work on that name. But I hope our work results in more than just another cute "Silicon-Something" slogan.

Like Ontario, Minnesota is moving toward achieving one of the best telecommunications networks in the world, and Canada is helping. Onvoy, a Minnesota-based Internet provider, has extended its reach into every major city in Canada by forming a strategic alliance with Manitoba Telecom.

I'm here to promote exactly that kind of partnership, that kind of collaboration between your country and mine, your province and mine, your businesses and ours.

And I can think of nothing that should stand in our way.  
I know that your mission is to enhance the competitive position of businesses here in Toronto. And in just the same way: a critical portion of my "Big Plan" for Minnesota is about strengthening Minnesota's position as a global competitor.

I'm confident that we both will succeed, with a little help from each other, and with a little collaboration between good friends and longtime partners.

Thank you.