



Good morning.

I didn't have to look far for the perfect audience for my announcement today—

The title of this conference says it all. You are here because you're interested in "Making Work *WORK*."

I'm here to tell you--so am I. So interested, in fact, that I intend to do something about it.

Today I am announcing a comprehensive strategy that addresses the fact that:

Education

Workforce development

And economic development are connected at the hip--and should be inseparable.

Workforce development *is* economic development--and education is the vehicle that increases personal income AND makes Minnesota businesses more competitive.

We've known this for some time in Minnesota.

In fact, we've talked about it for years--in task forces and reports that have called for consolidating programs and improving the delivery of services.

Now it's time to transform the state's role in economic and workforce development:

To give *all* Minnesotans the choices they want and the services they need

*when* they need them

*where* they live.

To give employers the workforce they *want*

with the skills they *need*

to make their businesses *succeed*.

I want to congratulate Morrie Anderson and the transition team for their vision and hard work in putting the pieces together--because that's just what they've done.

With their recommendations, we can begin moving *from* separate programs of education, workforce and economic development



*toward* a seamless system of service delivery that meets the needs of both workers and employers.

With this goal in mind--my proposal to the legislature involves more than just a merger of the Department of Trade and Economic Development and the Department of Economic Security. My plan focuses on three critical components:

- 1)Regional leadership. Minnesota doesn't need another layer of bureaucracy--but people need access to services where they live. The best way to get those services where they're needed most is to rely on the virtual networks already in place throughout the state.
- 2)Structure. We need to be strategic about the decisions we make - and that means moving the decision-making from the program level to a larger, overarching policy structure. We need to create a place for strategic vision to grow and evolve, so I will chair a high-level group of business, labor and community leaders to monitor our progress toward meeting the goals I set.
- 3)Accountability. I demand results - and with consolidated programs and services - we will be able to track performance across the board to make sure we're getting the job done. We will also coordinate the workforce and economic development efforts of several state agencies to streamline operations and improve services.

I'll now turn this over to Morrie Anderson, who has led this transition effort. Commissioner Rebecca Yanisch--who will head the new Workforce and Economic Development Department--or WEDD--will also say a few words.

Morrie--