

Governor Whitman – I’d like to officially welcome you to Minnesota.

It’s always nice to see a former colleague – and a member of the Bush Administration - visit our state, especially when you bring along some money to hand out.

Two of my favorite words are “Federal Grant.”

And in this case it’s to serve such a good purpose – to increase our security and to help guard the health of Minnesotans.

You know – I’ve always had a special connection with water –

In high school I was a competitive swimmer,

In the Navy SEALs I served my country in and under the water.

And much of my recreational time is spent in and on the water – (hopefully – not when I’m playing golf).

But without a doubt the most important water we have is the drinking water in our reservoirs, our water towers and underground.

It is vitally necessary to keep that water pure and plentiful.

Minnesota has long been a leader in maintaining high water quality – but special times call for an extra effort.

The federal grants we are receiving today will help us to strengthen our security plans for drinking water facilities in our big cities and small towns alike.

The effort to increase the safety and security of our drinking water is an important battle in the war against terrorism.

On behalf of all Minnesotans, I would like to express my appreciation for this valuable state-federal-city partnership.

It’s by sticking together that we can win.

Mayor Kelly and Mayor Ryback – it’s water that *separates* you – but it’s also water that *unites* you.

Governor Whitman – thank you very much.

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