

Today the State of Minnesota has suffered a deep and penetrating loss. With all of us suffering from the numbing experiences of our nation's recent tragedies, this loss seems especially cruel.

For those of us who knew and worked with Senator Wellstone, his dedication to his state and nation was profound. His energy, his passion, and his love of people were overwhelming.

For us to lose Paul Wellstone as a leader and a person is devastating, but for us to lose Shelia, Marcia and his dedicated staff members makes our already heavy hearts even sadder.

But we must be strong. And to be strong we only need to remember Paul Wellstone's energy, Paul Wellstone's integrity, Paul Wellstone's absolute love of his country, the people he represented, his friends, and most of all his family.

On behalf of the people of Minnesota, the members of my administration and my family, I want to say that Paul Wellstone will long be remembered as the great man he was. In his honor I have ordered state flags to be flown at half- staff now through the election.

Finally, I had tremendous respect for Paul, and I will forever be indebted to him for his service and his ultimate sacrifice for this great democracy.

Thank you