

Thank you for inviting me to speak this afternoon. It's good to be here in Brainerd.

We are here today to kick off the “Service, Not Systems” vision of the Big Plan. That means a SIMPLER state government with INVOLVED CITIZENS. It means *shaking up* state government as we know it and looking at better and more efficient ways to serve Minnesotans in this new day.

The BIG PLAN is my vision for Minnesota and is based on using the resources we already have for meeting our goals for the state. It's not about government spending more than it does already. It's about spending smarter.

It's time that we start asking tough questions and not accept the frequently used explanation “that's how it's always been done.” There are better ways to do the public's business.

The “Service, Not Systems” vision emphasizes the end-game—how we get more bang for the buck. I've challenged all my commissioners to think about results. We're already starting to improve some services:

- 1) Last month I created the Minnesota SAFE Coordinating Council to break down the silos so that agencies can talk to each other about a plan to deal with violence, crime and drug abuse. We want to ensure that current programs throughout state government are working together toward a common goal.
- 2) The Dept. of Public Safety's Division of Driver and Vehicle Services is reorganizing to reduce the time you wait for a driver's test from 4 weeks to one day in the metro.

These are two examples of what I want to see across all of state government. I want a government that is accessible and flexible, one that engages and involves the citizens, one that competes for business, empowers employees to do the right thing and focuses on the needs of the customer...the taxpayer.

Government should be open and easy to understand.

The way government works should not be a secret ... the state capitol should not be an intimidating building...and taxpayers should know how every hard earned dollar is being spent. After all, it's their money.

Being able to respond to these challenges means we have to put an emphasis on service, not on old systems.

To accomplish service, not systems, I am asking for the following:

1. A UNICAMERAL LEGISLATURE to simplify the lawmaking process and force elected officials to be responsive and accountable to their constituents.
2. ACTIVE, ENGAGED CITIZENS...The world belongs to those who show up.
  - I think most people don't get involved because they are tired of the same old political rhetoric and don't think that their voice counts.
  - In the last election, Minnesotans proved to me that citizen involvement and participation still works...it is the very heart of the American Democracy.
  - Voting is the most basic measure of citizen involvement. I want to increase voter participation to at least 70% in every election.
3. GETTING THE BEST BANG FOR THE BUCK IN STATE AGENCIES
  - We in state government need to continue to push the envelope, bring about change, to challenge state employees and to remember who we are serving.
  - Increasing the efficiency of government, increasing the quality of services and getting the best value for every taxpayer dollar—and being honest with citizens—will be a hallmark of this administration.
4. REFORMING POLITICS AS USUAL
  - Today's political campaigns are too often about power and money
  - Public offices shouldn't go to the highest bidder
  - Our political process should be driven by the public good...we need to limit the influence of special interests in campaigns and focus on the issues that matter to Minnesotans
5. REIN IN RULEMAKING AND EXCESSIVE REGULATION
  - I signed a bill into law last year that allows me to veto rules created by the executive branch. I am holding my administration accountable in ensuring reasonableness, clarity and enforceability in the rulemaking process. If it doesn't make sense to you or to me, it won't make sense to the rest of the public.
  - So here's what it comes down to, it is my administration's desire to limit the size of state government, increase accountability, and serve citizens responsibly and responsively.
6. ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT SERVICES

- Because citizens are going online at such a fast rate, sound policy is essential for both the internet and online commerce to reach their full potential.
- Initiatives and how electronic government services will influence and affect “Service, Not Systems”.

#### 7. BUILDING A TAX SYSTEM THAT ACTUALLY MAKES SENSE.

- It’s time to build a better tax system that makes sense for Minnesota.
- It needs to be simple, understandable, fair and supportive of our overall goals for Minnesota.
- The Minnesota Department of Revenue is holding tax reform citizen dialogues throughout the state including one tomorrow in Bemidji.

Now I’d like to introduce Commissioner Smith...