



Governor Ventura's call to patriotism is from his heart. He passionately believes that he, legislators and all Minnesotans should take their patriotism to a higher level in fixing an economy that was further damaged by the events of September 11.

In no way did he mean to question anyone's fundamental patriotic values. His message was: don't let politics rule. Get in touch with your patriotic values and do the right thing.

His call to rise above petty politics and vindictiveness is sincere.

The same legislative leaders who stage petty door knocking media opportunities and righteously criticize the Governor's personal life are screaming in protest at Ventura's urging that they put aside political advantage and concentrate on sound, fair public policy.

For three years the legislature has taken every opportunity to criticize Governor Ventura, saying he is not engaged. Now the shoe is on the other foot and they can't handle it.

Let them deny that this bill was crafted for political advantage. The facts will betray them:

- Politics or Policy? HF 351 cuts the Legislature 3 percent but the Governor's office 15 percent.
- Politics or Policy? HF 351 cuts the legislature by 3 percent but Commissioner Wheelock's Department of Finance by 17 percent.
- Politics or Policy? HF 351 cuts the legislature by 3 percent and Commissioner Carter's Department of Employee Relations by 15 percent.
- Politics or Policy? HF 351 uses every single penny of reserves in state government, yet does not touch a single penny of the reserves of the local governments in their districts.
- Politics or Policy? HF 351 was passed by the legislature late Thursday afternoon. By early Friday morning a Republican leader of the house began airing radio ads claiming credit for solving the budget crisis.
- Politics or Policy? HF 351 was hurriedly passed on Thursday. The next day a Democratic leader of the Senate was off to Northern Minnesota for a campaign event.
- Politics or Policy? HF 351 was passed on Thursday. On Friday the Governor cancelled all his weekend plans and offered to negotiate all weekend to reach a long-term agreement. Senate leaders begged off stating concern that they would not be able to attend Senator Moe's announcement for Governor in Northwestern Minnesota. (Of course, if the tables were turned and the Governor was unavailable we can be sure that the legislature would not have taken political advantage.)

Legislators can scream all they want but all that accomplishes is avoidance. The real problem is that they chose politics over policy.



The Governor's plan has been on the table since January 10. It is a complete fix. It is tough, but it is fair. It will maintain our triple AAA bond rating and it is not part of a re-election strategy.