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## **Absolutism vs. policymaking**

Like many Minnesotans, we were alarmed by some of Gov. Jesse Ventura's comments to Playboy magazine. We were appalled, however, by Steve Sviggum's statements in response to Ventura. Sviggum argued that Ventura ought to have more religion in his life so that he would understand that there are "rights and wrongs in society" and no "gray area."

Our Legislature is responsible for conducting democratic debate and reaching compromises between individuals who subscribe to many different "truths," religious or otherwise. Policymaking should not be a crusade for the "truth" — it should be a democratic process through which a variety of options are considered thoughtfully. Mature policymaking involves understanding where your opponents are coming from and having empathy for their positions, and understanding that the ethical decisions that face the government are filled with "gray areas" that are not easily resolved.

One would hope the speaker of the Minnesota House would feel responsible for encouraging debate within these "gray areas."

— *Dan Gladen and Naomi Rockler, Eden Prairie.*