

Governor Tim Pawlenty
June 2, 2009
Governor's Reception Room
State Capitol
Saint Paul, Minnesota

****Remarks as prepared for delivery.*

Today I'm announcing that, in light of the Brett Favre situation and its unsettling impact on the people of Minnesota, I am signing an executive order requiring Joe Mauer, in addition to catching for the Twins, to also play quarterback for the Vikings.

These are tough times, Joe, and everybody has to dig deep.

Of course, I actually have a different announcement for you. Today, I'm announcing I will not seek a third term as Governor.

At these types of announcements, the speaker often says something like "last but not least, I would like to thank the following people."

Instead, I would like to express my gratitude not last, but right up front – starting with acknowledging and thanking God for the great State of Minnesota, its kind and generous people and for the opportunity to serve this special, jaw-droppingly amazing state.

I would also like to thank the love of my life, the mother of our two daughters and the person who has carried more of the load than you could ever imagine, the fabulous First Lady of Minnesota, Mary Pawlenty.

My daughters Anna and Mara have grown-up with all the challenges that come with your Dad being Governor. They have been very patient and exhibited great grace through it all. I love them so much, and I am very proud of both of them.

My other family members, incredibly loyal and fantastic staff and cabinet members, steadfast supporters, Lieutenant Governor Molnau, friends and so many others who have carried so much of the load – deserve and have my utmost respect and appreciation.

I also want to thank legislators and public servants all across Minnesota. While sometimes we may have had our differences, I have great respect and appreciation for good people who are willing to enter the difficult arena of public service. I am thankful for all of them.

But the real secret to Minnesota's success is its people, and I am so very grateful for them. As Governor, I've been constantly inspired by the courage and ingenuity of Minnesotans. It has been – and it will continue to be – a great joy and opportunity to make the most of their amazing spirit, even in these tough times.

I've seen so many examples of the goodness of Minnesotans all over this great state. But one of my most memorable is witnessing packed high school gymnasiums in Greater Minnesota every time our soldiers head out or come home. Young and old, affluent and struggling, the people of the town show up, and they stand up for things that matter. They value service, courage, honor and country.

Serving this incredible state has been the great honor of my life. I'm profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the wonderful people of Minnesota.

My administration has made a major, positive difference for Minnesota. We developed and deployed the best support programs for members of the military, their families and veterans in the country. We led the nation in developing a cleaner, more secure and more Americanized energy future. We led the nation in education reform and results, have been nation-leading in redesigning and improving health care and much more.

And importantly, we imposed some much-needed discipline on government in this state by keeping a lid on taxes and spending. We even succeeded in achieving the long-standing goal of moving Minnesota out of the top ten mostly highly-taxed states.

I still have lots of energy and ideas. But, being Governor should not be a permanent position for someone.

With length of service in public office, a little less is always better than a little too much.

It's a lesson I learned spending time in places like the Croatian Hall in South Saint Paul, where there is inevitably less joy and more trouble in too much pizza or too much beer.

We don't have term limits in Minnesota, but we do have good judgment and common sense. We are a government of laws and ideas, not personalities.

Time marches on, and now it's time to give someone else a chance.

I'm announcing my decision now so candidates interested in running for this office will have ample time to make their plans and make their case to the people of Minnesota.

Be assured, though, that I will make the most of the 19 months I have left in the office Minnesotans have entrusted to me. I will continue to spend every day doing what's right for them. Minnesota will get my very best until I'm done. There is much important and difficult work remaining, and I will tackle it aggressively and finish strong.

The Scriptures say "there is a time for every purpose". For me, the purpose of the next 19 months will be to do the very best I can for Minnesota.

I'm also hopeful Minnesotans will make a wise and good choice for who leads this state next.

Thanks and God bless you all.