

Paul Gardner
State Representative

District 53A
Anoka and Ramsey Counties



Minnesota House of Representatives

May 11, 2009

The Honorable Tom Emmer
301 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Mark Buesgens
307 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representatives Emmer and Buesgens:

As the legislative session winds down, tensions often run high. As members of the majority and the minority do their best to stand up for their principles and see the session to a timely and successful conclusion, there will be friction between the caucuses and among individual members. Despite these pressures, it is the responsibility of all members of the Minnesota House of Representatives to conduct themselves with the highest level of professionalism and decorum, and to focus on differences of policy and not on personalities.

On Friday, May 8th, I failed in that responsibility. Using a new social networking framework – Twitter – I sent out two messages that were disparaging of you and Representative Buesgens personally. I apologize for this transgression. We often get emotional during important debate, and tempers can flare, but that can be no excuse. Late Friday, I deleted the offending “tweets” so that they are no longer on the system.

Having reflected on this event for several days, I pledge to do my utmost to comply not just with the letter but the spirit of our House rules and standards of decorum. My hope is that during these final tense days of the session, this incident will help focus all members on the need to elevate the political debate to a higher level.

During these last days of reflection, I also recalled that it was Rep. Emmer who was the first of the Republican House caucus to greet me on the first working day of my first term. You went out of your way, and I at once felt welcome in the House. I hope that we might renew that initial camaraderie and ask for your pardon.

I wish you the best for the remainder of the session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Gardner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Gardner" clearly distinguishable.
Paul Gardner

