

EXHIBIT

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DATE

2/15/05

HB

540

TESTIMONY
OF
JULIA DONEY, PRESIDENT
FORT BELKNAP INDIAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BEFORE THE
JOINT APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FOR LONG RANGE PLANNING
HEARING--HB-540
FEBRUARY 15, 2005

Greetings from the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine people of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. I am submitting this Testimony as President of the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council to represent the interests of our Tribes on the proposed appropriation of bond proceeds in the amount of \$9.5 million for the Fort Belknap Water Compact.

I wish to express the appreciation of our Tribes for your consideration of this action to fulfill State of Montana commitments. It has been several years now since this compact was given tentative approval by the negotiating teams. With the passage of time, comes the changing of representatives and differing perspectives on the obligations of involved parties. We wish to clarify whether this amount is the appropriate final obligation of the State of Montana to finalize our compact.

At our Tribal Council level, we did not have contact from anyone at the State of Montana as this bill was being prepared. Again, we appreciate the willingness of the State of Montana to fulfill obligations, but do wish to have some discussion on this amount, prior to its final approval.

Julia Doney, President
Fort Belknap Indian Community Council