



EXHIBIT NO. 16
DATE 2-16-15
FILE NO. SB 262

SENATE JUDICIARY

Exhibit No. 1816

Date: 2/16/15

Bill No. SB 262

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee,

My name is Ross Middlemist, R-O-S-S M-I-D-D-L-E-M-I-S-T

My family has ranched in the Dixon area for 102 years. Our ranch is 3000 acres, 470 of which is irrigated. With the help of our children, we run 400 mother cows. We are multi-generational ranchers; this is not a hobby farm.

Giving our irrigation water rights to the CSKT places an ominous cloud over our ranching enterprise. The CSKT Water Compact will seriously reduce the amount of irrigation water we receive and can be lowered even more from year to year.

How do we secure an operating loan with that kind of uncertainty?

Banks want projections on yields of hay and grain and calf weights. We will only be able to answer with ifs and maybes, but banks dont make loans that way.

If this compact passes, I believe our land will be worth pennies on the dollar. Our survival in the business of raising food for America could be five years or less.

I ask that you please vote NO on the CSKT Water Compact.

Thank you

Ross Middlemist
Revais Creek Ranch
Dixon, MT