



EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE APSÁALOOKE NATION

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Frank White Clay, Chairman
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May 22, 2024

Senator Tester
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Senator Tester,

On behalf of the Crow Nation, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your sponsorship of the Crow Water Rights Settlement Amendments Act of 2024. The Crow Tribe strongly supports the legislation as it will enhance the Tribe's ability to implement the water settlement projects including Clean Drinking Water Delivery for our communities and completion of a Hydro power project.

The Crow Reservation encompasses 2.2 million acres in Montana with approximately 7900 tribal member residents that reside in our reservation communities and rural areas. The 2010 Crow Water Settlement Act was project specific and defined clean water delivery as a reservation wide pipeline. The pipeline proved difficult due to the complexity of project design, the extreme increase in costs for construction and a concern that future operational costs would be burdensome for Tribal members. The Tribe supports the Amendment Act that will provide flexibility for the Tribe to meet water delivery goals sooner and without additional costs.

The Crow Tribe conducted a water study that showed over 50% of the Crow Reservation households depend on contaminated water. The proposed Amendment Act will allow the Crow Tribe to deliver clean safe drinking water to all the reservation residents within the next few years. Further, moving funds into the Beneficiary Trust Fund Accounts will ensure water settlement funds are utilized for projects that will best protect future generations of the Crow Tribe.

The Amendment Act will provide a significant benefit to the Crow people and I am hopeful, with your assistance, that the Act will be adopted.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank White Clay".

Frank White Clay, Chairman