



*Montana State Legislature*  
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Representative Paul Tuss**  
House District 28 - Havre

DURING THE SESSION  
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SENATORS TESTER AND DAINES:

I am pleased to add my support for the Fort Belknap Indian Community Water Rights Settlement Act of 2023 (S. 1987) and thank you for your work to champion its passage during this session of Congress.

S. 1987 not only affirms the senior water rights of the Fort Belknap Indian Community for the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine people, but it also significantly and importantly invests hundreds of millions of dollars into updating and modernizing the infrastructure that is needed along the Hi-Line to deliver water through the St. Mary/Milk River System to communities that include Havre, Chinook, Harlem and Fort Belknap. This water is critical for the drinking water supplies for these communities and helps to irrigate more than 120,000 acres in northern Montana.

The Milk River would run dry in seven out of every ten years were it not for water from the St. Mary/Milk River System. Thus, it is of paramount importance that the funds included in S. 1987 for the repair and rehabilitation of this System be expeditiously appropriated for this cause. To indicate that the economy of northern Montana would be devastated without the proper functioning of this System is not overstating the case.

Thank you for your strong advocacy for the passage of S. 1987. Please add my equally strong support and let me know if there is anything I can assist with to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Tuss".

Rep. Paul Tuss  
House District 28