



April 29, 2024

Chair Pappas and Chair Lee:

This letter is submitted in support of Senate File 5002/House File 5023, which would provide \$9.25 million in funding for the West Central Regional Water District (WCRWD). We understand that you are still in the process of identifying which local project requests to include in this year's omnibus capital investment bill and urge your continued consideration of WCRWD. This appropriation would enable the buildout of Phase 1 of a regional water pipeline to provide clean and safe drinking water to numerous communities in Northwest Minnesota.

Health and Economic Benefits of the WCRWD Project:

This project will have significant health and economic benefits. The region served by this project tends to have high levels of arsenic, iron, and manganese in existing drinking water sources. Each of these can cause health hazards—which are most prevalent in children.

Regionalizing the area's water system will provide significant economies of scale for our region and the state, by consolidating both infrastructure and operating costs, rather than pursuing the construction and maintenance of separate water treatment facilities in each city. Regionalization offers substantial savings in daily operations and demonstrates a 2-3x life cycle cost reduction when compared to individual water treatment facilities.

This approach entails sharing administrative and workforce duties among the region's communities. Not only does this alleviate the strain of hiring and retaining qualified operators but also fosters collaboration. Embracing this model not only enhances operational efficiency but also ensures long-term sustainability, benefiting both individual cities and funding agencies alike.

This project is also leveraging significant local and federal funds. Recently, WCRWD received federal funding through the Environmental Protection Agency of \$3.5 million.

The WCRWD project has received widespread support:

County Resolutions Forming and Supporting The District: Clay; Polk; Norman

Organizations that Have Submitted Letters of Support: Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association; Halstad Economic Development Authority; Minnesota Rural Water Association; Norman County EDA; Halstad Business League; Northwest Regional Development Commission

City and Township letters of Support: City of Climax; City of Hendrum; City of Nielsville; City of Beltrami; City of Georgetown; City of Felton; City of Borup; City of Perley; City of Shelly; City of Halstad; Shelly Township

Thank you

With questions about the WCRWD project, please contact Lucas Spaeth, Superintendent, Halstad Public Utilities at (218) 456-2128 or utilities@rrv.net; or Stephen Slick, project manager at Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, (AE2S) at (218) 341-2407 or Stephen.Slick@ae2s.com.