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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3503

May 5, 2005

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The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

I am writing to urge you to request the International Joint Commission (IJC) to review the proposal to construct the Devil's Lake outlet in North Dakota. This project would divert water from Devil's Lake into the Sheyenne River and ultimately into Canadian waters.

The IJC was created under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 in order to help prevent and resolve disputes relating to the use and quality of boundary waters and to advise Canada and the United States on related questions. As a representative from the Great Lakes region, I want to be sure that all of this nation's boundary waters receive the same protections under this Treaty. Any precedent that is set with respect to the Devil's Lake project could certainly impact how the U.S. and Canada address projects on the Great Lakes.

Once the project is complete, I understand that there is a risk that aquatic invasive species may move freely between Devil's Lake and the Sheyenne River, easily spreading into new waters. As the Great Lakes region has learned, aquatic invasive species are an economic, environmental, and sometimes a human health concern. Therefore, it is very important that there is careful consideration about whether this project will increase the risk of aquatic invasive species introductions.

The Boundary Waters Treaty provides the principles and mechanisms to help resolve disputes and to prevent future ones along the boundary between the United States and Canada. A reference to the IJC will ensure that all interests are adequately presented and considered. I appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Very respectfully yours,



Mike DeWine
United States Senator

RMD/jam

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