

BETTY McCOLLUM
4TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA



COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

www.house.gov/mccollum

1029 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6631
FAX: (202) 225-1968

165 WESTERN AVENUE NORTH
SUITE 17
ST. PAUL, MN 55102
(651) 224-9191
FAX: (651) 224-3056

UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 15, 2005

Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madame Secretary:

On December 2, 2003, I wrote to your predecessor asking him to conclude that the Devil's Lake project in North Dakota violated the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 (letter attached). Since then this project, which will divert water from Devil's Lake into the Red River of the North, has proceeded and is nearing completion. I ask you now to immediately refer this project to the International Joint Commission (IJC) for an independent and credible review.

The IJC was established by the Boundary Waters Treaty to resolve and prevent trans-boundary water disputes. It is an independent, bi-national body that is held in the highest regard around the world. It is critical that this well-respected body have an opportunity to examine the impacts of the Devil's Lake outlet. I believe that if they do they will see that the Devil's Lake project has the potential to do irreparable harm to Minnesota's and Canada's waters.

Even more serious is that the failure to refer this project to the IJC will set a precedent for all other boundary water issues between the U.S. and Canada. This could potentially cripple the treaty, which has for almost 100 years helped protect the waters along our northern border.

The importance of our relationship with Canada and the importance of the Boundary Waters Treaty cannot be understated. Decisions concerning shared water resources should be based on consensus and not done unilaterally by any one party. It would be irresponsible to do otherwise. My home state has consistently worked with our neighbors on environmental projects that impact our region. Ignoring the impact of the Devils Lake project would hurt the relationships that Minnesota has developed with the Canadian provinces whose borders we share and with our neighboring U.S. states. We would certainly jeopardize the possibility of future agreements and consequently our

shared natural resources by not honoring existing treaties with our good friend to the north.

I ask again that you immediately refer the Devil's Lake project in North Dakota to the IJC for review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Betty McCollum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Betty" being particularly prominent and stylized.

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

BM:cl

Cc: Honorable Tim Pawlenty, Governor, Minnesota
Mr. Gene Merriam, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Ms. Sheryl Corrigan, Commissioner, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Honorable Gary Doer, Premier, Manitoba
Honorable Frank McKenna, Embassy of Canada