

**Fifty-fifth Legislative Assembly, State of North Dakota, begun in the Capitol in the City of Bismarck, on Monday, the sixth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven**

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3015  
(Representatives Drovdal, Kempenich, Warner)  
(Senator Bowman)**

A concurrent resolution urging Congress to provide funds to replace the Four Bears Bridge.

**WHEREAS**, in 1944 Congress enacted the Flood Control Act of 1944 [the Pick-Sloan Act], which authorized the construction of various dams on the Missouri River, including the Garrison Dam project, for the benefit of citizens of many states for the provision of inexpensive electricity, flood control, water supply, and recreational opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of the Garrison Dam, Lake Sakakawea was created on the Missouri River which caused areas of North Dakota and the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation which were previously closely connected by land to be separated by long expanses of water; and

**WHEREAS**, a vital link in North Dakota's system of highways are bridges crossing the Missouri River, including the Four Bears Bridge constructed in 1952 by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, located near the city of New Town on State Highway 23 connecting United States Highways 83 and 85 and traveling through the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Four Bears Bridge is the only bridge across the Missouri River for 190 miles of the river with the next two closest crossings being a bridge 90 highway miles to the north and Garrison Dam 100 highway miles to the south; and

**WHEREAS**, the Four Bears Bridge provides a vital link for the entire state as well as many rural communities in northwest North Dakota, including access links to businesses, farms, schools, and other educational facilities, health facilities, government offices, and ambulance, police, and fire protection services which are integral to the health, safety, and well-being of the citizens living in this area; and

**WHEREAS**, at the time of the completion of the Four Bears Bridge by the Corps of Engineers, it was obsolete based on the bridge construction standards of that time, and presently is even more hazardous because of the narrow width of its driving surface; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Dakota Department of Transportation is required to maintain and repair the Four Bears Bridge and will be required to spend at least \$8,000,000 in major renovation and repairs to keep it in a safe and usable condition for the foreseeable future if the bridge is not replaced; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Dakota Department of Transportation has determined that instead of costly repair and maintenance of an already obsolete bridge, the bridge should be replaced at an estimated cost of \$42,000,000; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of North Dakota has examined the many funding options but simply does not have adequate funds to either provide major maintenance for the bridge or to construct a new bridge without jeopardizing the maintenance needs and safety of other bridges in North Dakota;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:**

That the Fifty-fifth Legislative Assembly urges the Congress of the United States to take whatever actions and make available appropriate funds as are necessary to replace the Four Bears Bridge in recognition of the continued federal responsibility for the Garrison Dam project; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Fifty-fifth Legislative Assembly also requests the assistance and advocacy of all federal agencies responsible for or having an interest in the

construction, maintenance, and replacement of the Four Bears Bridge to take all action necessary to solve the urgent problem of the replacement of the Four Bears Bridge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House

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President of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

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Secretary of the Senate

Filed in this office this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1997,  
at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of State