Testimony of Alan Walter
Garrison Diversion Conservancy District Board Chairman
Senate Bill 2020
Senate Appropriations Committee – Education & Environment Division
Bismarck, North Dakota – January 19, 2023

Hello Chairman Sorvaag and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee Education and Environment Division. My name is Alan Walter and I am the Chairman of the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Garrison Diversion) Board. I am here to testify in support of funding for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project in Senate Bill 2020 - the Department of Water Resources budget.

Garrison Diversion and Lake Agassiz Water Authority (Lake Agassiz) are the state cosponsors of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project. We are requesting the inclusion of $255 million dollars in Senate Bill 2020 to provide long-term drought protection to nearly 50% of North Dakota's population. The Project will deliver water from the Missouri River to central and eastern North Dakota via a buried pipeline.

The State of North Dakota has been a vital partner thus far in the development of the Project. However, now is the time to fully commit to constructing the Red River Valley Water Supply Project to ensure drought protection is in place soon. Right now, we have $340 million of shovel-ready construction and design work ready to begin if the Project is funded at the requested level this biennium. Our $255 million request will be combined with $85 million of local cost-share allowing for an accelerated build schedule. An accelerated construction schedule will provide drought protection sooner, and will also protect the State and users from the ongoing risk of inflation.

In addition, seeing proof of the State's commitment to the Red River Valley Water Supply Project is critically important to the Project's potential end users. As Garrison Diversion meets with cities and rural water systems, the prospective end users need to have confidence in

the State's commitment to getting the Project built in a timely manner. A strong State commitment will provide confidence to local water systems currently deliberating their level of involvement.

Please approve our $255 million funding request to move the Red River Valley Water Supply Project forward sooner. Thank you, Chairman Sorvaag and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee Education and Environment Division for hearing my testimony today.