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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Amber Finley, and I am a citizen of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation. I am also Director of Research and Development and a full-time faculty member of the Science Department at Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed study on the environmental risks and impacts associated with oil and chemical spills on state highways within the Fort Berthold Reservation.

The Fort Berthold Reservation, home to the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nations, is an area deeply tied to its land and people. Over the years Fort Berthold Indian Reservation (FBIR) has experienced significant changes due to the expansion of oil and gas operations, with a marked increase in the transportation of these materials through state highways that pass through the region. While these operations provide economic benefits, they also pose significant environmental risks to the people and species who call this land home.

Oil and chemical spills can have devastating consequences. Spills have the potential to degrade local water sources, harm wildlife, and disrupt the ecosystems that many Tribal citizens rely on for sustenance and cultural practices. The long-term effects of such spills can be felt for generations.

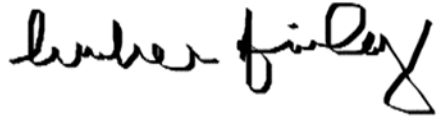
The expertise and commitment of Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College makes it uniquely suited to lead this study in collaboration with our Tribal GIS Department and our Tribal Environmental Department. The College has conducted environmental research on the Fort Berthold Reservation for the past 20 plus years, using the most current scientific and analytical methodologies and in partnership with other research universities. NHS College proposes to conduct an environmental analysis of the soil, water, and air for the presence of hydrocarbons. We will also conduct a biological survey of spill sites to document the ecological impact of oil and chemical spills on state highways within the FBIR.

The College has a deep understanding of the cultural, social, and environmental concerns that matter most to the Fort Berthold communities. By conducting a thorough and scientifically grounded study, the College can provide crucial data to inform decision-making and advocacy efforts aimed at improving environmental protections. The results of this study will inform and empower our community to advocate for necessary changes to policy and safety practices surrounding the transportation of oil and chemicals through our land.

I urge all parties involved to support this important research. A study led by Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College will not only enhance our understanding of potential risks posed by oil and chemical spills but will also strengthen the ability of our community to protect our people, land, and future generations.

Thank you for considering this vital initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber Finley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'A' and 'F'.

Amber Finley  
Science Faculty & Director of Research and Development  
Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College