

## **Testimony on Behalf of Southwest Water Authority Regarding the Benefits to Southwest North Dakota**

From:  
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Chairman Vigesaa and member of the House Appropriations committee, I am writing today in support of House Bill 1020 and specifically the support for the Southwest Pipeline Project.

I am currently retired from Job Service North Dakota, where I worked for more than 36 years, the last being as the customer service manager in Dickinson. Prior to that, I was a teacher at South Heart High School for two years. I also worked several jobs during my high school and college years, including two summers at the Dickinson Water Treatment Plant. I lived in Dickinson for all but two years and am reaching my 81st year of age shortly.

I strongly support a positive review and approval regarding actions and funding related to Southwest Water and other state water projects. During my life in Dickinson, I have lived several years with water delivery from Patterson Lake. Although the lake is a huge benefit to our community, I also easily recall many situations, over the years, where the water distribution to the City of Dickinson was quite precarious. As a Camper and water skier at the lake, the green water of algae certainly gave an incentive not to fall while skiing. I also recall several years where drought conditions worried the City Fathers and Local Citizens regarding water quality, even to the extent of having to recycle wastewater.

During my early years at Job Service in Dickinson, I served as the Rural Representative serving the 8 SWND counties. In that capacity I traveled, about three days per week, to the local cities and towns in that area. I stopped at many cafes and other facilities during my trips. It was not unusual, in many cases, that I was a bit wary about drinking the water due to the off taste or brownish color.

Luckily the past Legislators felt a need to create Southwest Water Authority to build and administer projects bringing Lake Sakakawea water to the western communities of North Dakota. This has been, perhaps, one of the greatest benefits for our area regarding health, economics, recreation, growth and other aspects.

However, the project benefits must continue to be funded to assure the maintenance of these facilities, inclusion of other communities in our region, and the extension into other areas of the State of North Dakota where water needs continue to exist.

In addition, I live about a block away from Southwest Water Authority's main facility in Dickinson. I am impressed with the buildings at the site, the maintenance of those buildings and the grounds surrounding it. I also appreciate the staff and board and their work regarding this entity. I urge all legislative officials to vote for bills regarding Southwest Water Authority and other water benefits.