

Testimony HCR 3029

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Testimony in Support for HCR 3029

Chairman Porter and members of the committee my name is Scott Skokos and I am here to support HCR 3029 on behalf of Dakota Resource Council. Dakota Resource Council is a statewide family farm and conservation organization with more than 600 dues paying members statewide. Our interest in HCR 3029 comes mainly from our affiliate Fort Berthold Protectors of Water and Earth Rights (POWER), who have been working to mitigate flaring and other air pollution on Fort Berthold.

HCR 3029 begins the process of studying air quality on Fort Berthold, which is the first step that needs to be completed in order to determine if permanent ambient air quality monitoring is needed or other mitigation measures are needed to improve air quality in and around the reservation. Presently, there are no ambient air quality monitors on Fort Berthold, so there is a massive data gap when it comes to air quality on the reservation, which could be remedied through the passage of this resolution.

I'd like to also highlight prior work that was done relating to many of the topics in this resolution. Specifically, in late 2019 members of DRC affiliate Fort Berthold POWER met with Dave Glatt and Jim Semerad from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to discuss the possibility of getting permanent ambient air monitoring on the reservation. Following their initial meeting with DEQ, members of Fort Berthold POWER began meeting with members of the Fort Berthold Tribal Business Council to discuss the creation of an ambient air monitoring program on Fort Berthold. The result of the meetings with members of the Tribal Business Council was the convening of another meeting in Bismarck between DEQ, some members and representatives of the Fort Berthold Tribal Business Council, and Scott Davis from Indian Affairs to have a larger conversation about how Fort Berthold and state government could work together to get more environmental monitoring on the reservation (and potentially the formation of an EPA recognized environmental program on Fort Berthold). Following the meeting between representatives of Fort Berthold, Fort Berthold POWER, Scott Davis, and DEQ, members of Fort Berthold POWER brought a resolution to the Fort Berthold Tribal Business Councils Energy Committee to start the process of developing an air quality monitoring program on Fort Berthold. The resolution passed unanimously. Unfortunately, the resolution never made it to the full Tribal Business Council because shortly after the pandemic began and mitigating COVID19 took priority for the Tribal Business Council.

By passing this resolution, this committee and the North Dakota Legislature will allow for the conversations that started prior to the pandemic to restart. In addition, we can get a clear picture

of what the current state of air quality is on Fort Berthold to determine what level of monitoring is necessary.

I will conclude by saying that this resolution in no way will hinder future oil development, rather it will allow future oil development to be done on Fort Berthold in the most environmentally friendly manner based on data. Thank you for your time, and I urge this committee to give this resolution a Do Pass recommendation. I can stand for any questions.