

TESTIMONY OF

**Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds, Water Development Division Director**

Chairman Porter, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I am Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds, the Water Development Division Director of the Department of Water Resources. I'm here today to provide testimony in opposition to the First Engrossment of SB 2379.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is responsible for the construction of the Southwest Pipeline Project, construction and operation of the Northwest Area Water Supply Project, and construction and operation of the Devils Lake Outlets. As part of these critical projects, DWR has installed over 5,500 miles of pipeline to support water supply and flood control in the state.

In order to ensure the proper siting and design of these pipeline routes, preliminary surveys on private property are necessary. These surveys are crucial for assessing cultural resources and determining the suitability of the land for pipeline installation. The process of obtaining written consent from landowners or securing a court order to enter private land as required by Engrossed SB 2379 presents significant challenges and could cause extensive delays to the projects.

I want to emphasize that the DWR team, along with our consulting team, fully respects landowner rights. We ensure that no physical damage is caused during the preliminary alignment surveys. In cases where more intrusive activities, such as geotechnical drilling, are required, we seek consent from the landowners before proceeding.

We understand and value the trust of the landowners, and it is our goal to complete these surveys in a manner that minimizes any disruption while ensuring the success of these important infrastructure projects.

We understand that an amendment to SB 2379 may be considered by the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. This amendment would change the bill to require a landowner notification prior to surveying. DWR would be supportive of this amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I'm happy to answer any questions.