

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 6, 2007

The Honorable Jim Nussle
Director
Office of Management and Budget
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Nussle:

As you work to complete action on the Administration's Fiscal Year 2009 budget, we urge you to include increased funding for construction of the Lewis and Clark Rural Water System. In particular, we urge you to include \$35 million in the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation budget for construction of the Lewis and Clark project. The overall construction capability of this project in Fiscal Year 2009 is expected to be \$100 million.

When completed, Lewis and Clark will provide safe, reliable drinking water to approximately 300,000 people in 20 communities and water districts in South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota. The three states involved in the project face regional water problems, including shallow wells, aquifers prone to contamination, compliance with federal drinking water standards, and increasing water demand due to population growth and economic expansion. Lewis and Clark represents a unique regional approach to these common water resource problems in a more effective and cost-efficient manner than each state could accomplish alone.

On July 17, 2007, the House of Representatives passed the Fiscal Year 2008 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which includes \$22.3 million for the Lewis and Clark project. The Senate version, as reported by the Appropriations Committee, includes \$28 million. We are hopeful that the final version of the Energy and Water Appropriations bill will include the Senate's higher funding level. As we begin the budget process for FY 2009, it is critical that the Administration's budget includes robust funding for this critical water project.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter and look forward to continuing to work closely with you and your office.

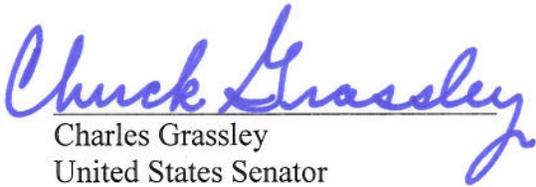
Kindest Regards,



John Thune
United States Senator



Tim Johnson
United States Senator



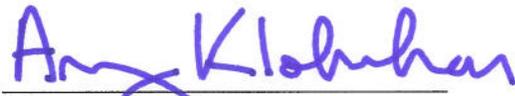
Charles Grassley
United States Senator



Tom Harkin
United States Senator



Norm Coleman
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator