

STATEMENT
OF
MICHAEL JANDREAU
LESTER THOMPSON
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

November 1, 2007

Chairman Dorgan, Senator Johnson, Members of the Committee, I am Chairman Mike Jandreau of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe. With me is Chairman Lester Thompson of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. Allow us to also recognize Senator Thune, who has introduced The Lower Brule and Crow Creek Compensation Act, S.160, with Senator Johnson.

First, Mr. Chairman, we appreciate that this hearing is on the larger question of compensation for all Tribes on the Missouri River (the River) that lost land as a result of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Program. We support full and fair compensation for all Tribes on the River, not just our two Tribes.

At the same time, however, we believe we are in a unique position. Our legislation was reported by the Committee in the 108th Congress and the 109th Congress. The legislation passed the Senate three times in the 108th Congress. After the bill was reported in the 109th Congress, Chairman McCain asked the GAO for a report on the legislation. A mathematical error was discovered and the legislation before you was then modified in several ways:

- First, the amount of compensation was reduced. For Lower Brule the amount in the bill was reduced from \$186 million to \$129 million, or \$57 million. The

Crow Creek amount was reduced by \$36 million, from \$105 million to \$69 million.

- Second, a new Section 5 was added making it clear that as to Lower Brule and Crow Creek this legislation would be full and final compensation, even if additional legislation were enacted for all other Missouri River Tribes; and, last,
- Section 5 also makes it clear that S. 160 would not be a precedent beyond the Missouri River Basin Program.

Mr. Chairman, the Flood Control Act of 1944 may have been good for the United States, but it has been devastating for River Tribes. I ask that our testimony of June 15, 2004 and June 24, 2006 be made a part of this hearing record.

In partial compensation for the damage caused by Pick-Sloan, the Congress did enact two Infrastructure Development Trust Funds for Lower Brule and for Crow Creek. We have used these funds to the best advantage of our Tribes. Meetings were held with our elders and other Tribal members to establish priorities and many critical projects have been undertaken. But we have only scratched the surface of what needs to be done to bring Tribal life and our Tribal economies into the mainstream of American life.

It is very painful to read The World is Flat and to read that the United States is outsourcing jobs to China and India when many American Indian reservations have an unemployment rate over 80% and a third world standard of living. When exactly is the United States going to establish a comprehensive plan for the Reservations here in the United States?

The Lower Brule and Crow Creek Compensation Act would enable our two Tribes to move forward with health care, justice programs, education, transportation, broadband, and our many other needs. Let us stress, however, we also support moving forward with legislation for all other River Tribes when they are ready to do so.

Our main point today is that it is not fair or right to hold our bill up until all other River Tribes are ready. Each year that passes we are losing millions of dollars in interest that our people need for critical services. We have done our studies, created our internal plans, and are ready to move forward. We are prepared therefore to accept S. 160 as full and final compensation.

Finally, let us stress that we are not seeking a hand out based on our human needs. This legislation is intended to provide compensation for the loss of our land and the costs suffered by our two Tribes. The Army Corps of Engineers has estimated that the Pick-Sloan project's overall contribution to the U.S. economy is over \$1.2 billion per year. Tribal compensation must be seen in that context. The United States took our best land and our water (under the Winters doctrine) to produce electricity. They then sell the electricity and instead of sharing the revenue with the Tribes, they charge us for the electricity.

This is fundamentally wrong! Further, we are not talking about injustices that were committed against the Indian people in the 1860's. We are talking about this year, 2007. It is time to correct the record and enact legislation that compensates all Tribes that have lost their land. It is time to fairly compensate River Tribes for their loss and their contribution to the American economy. We urge the Committee to look at the cost of the legislation in the context of history and the revenue that is generated each year by Pick-Sloan.

We urge the Committee to bring S. 160 to the floor of the United States Senate. Thank you.

STATEMENT
OF
CHAIRMAN LESTER THOMPSON
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
JUNE 14, 2006

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on the Tribal Parity Act, S. 374. I am Lester Thompson, the Chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. It is an honor for me to be here with Chairman Mike Jandreau. Chairman Jandreau is the most senior Chairman in our State and in the Great Sioux Nation. I am the most junior Chairman in the Sioux Nation, having been elected Chairman in April. I took office, along with a new Tribal Council, in May 2006.

I also would like to thank Senator Thune for introducing the Tribal Parity Act and Senator Johnson for cosponsoring. This legislation before you is of extraordinary importance to our Tribe. I am delighted that it is the subject of my first appearance before Congress.

The members of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe were relocated after Little Crow's War in Minnesota. People were transported on barges from Minnesota stopping at Santee and then we moved on to Crow Creek. Many lives were lost along the way. We are members of the Isanti and Ihanktowan divisions of the Great Sioux Nation. We speak Dakota and Nakota dialects. We have three districts on the reservation, and are a Treaty tribe.

The Crow Creek Sioux Tribe consists of 225,000 acres located in Central South Dakota. Our Western boundary is the Missouri River. In 1944, when the Congress enacted the Flood Control Act and authorized implementation of the Missouri River Basin Pick-Sloan Plan for water control, two of the dams, Fort Randall and Big Bend, flooded over 16,000 acres of our best and most productive bottom land. It was also the very land where a majority of our people lived. The cost to Crow Creek in human terms, and economically, was astronomical.

We lost:

- Our hospital;
- Housing units;
- Tribal Buildings and other structures;
- Schools;
- Businesses;
- Roads;
- Acres of waterbed and timberland, and domestic and ranch water systems;
- Food sources, such as fishing, hunting, and subsistence farming; and
- Ceremonial grounds and traditional medicines.

Our way of life was altered irreparably. Before the dams, the lifestyle was simple. The people worked in a community garden. In the evenings, the people would gather to share that day's catch of fish and the food gathered. They would meet to visit, pray, sing, and dance where the Bureau officials could not observe. The children attended boarding school within walking distance of their homes and family. The way of life, the social interactions, the camaraderie and sense of being one people – one Tribe, was destroyed by the environmental changes and forced relocation. The hospital and school were never replaced. The traditional medicine that grew solely in the waterbed and the Ceremonial Grounds are irreplaceable.

When the relocation took place, some purchased homes with the \$500 compensation received. Others received homes in low rent housing – a project constructed of fifty units in an area smaller than a city block.

The elders observed that this is when the change occurred. People started to watch each other, argue with each other, begrudge each other, and become disgruntled. With the loss of our school, the next option was the Immaculate Conception Boarding School, 13 miles away. The students were no longer able to walk to their homes and families on a daily basis, and those teaching were not people who believed in the heritage, culture, and customs of the students. Abuses that occurred in Catholic Boarding Schools are well documented historically, and I will not expand, except to say that the loss of our school negatively impacted our people on a much larger scale. This impact on the social development of our people has rippled down through generations.

Our Reservation is in Buffalo County, South Dakota. Buffalo County is the POOREST COUNTY IN AMERICA, and also has the highest cancer rate in the Nation. Many Elders believe that the building of the dam and disturbing the earth and the water flow released death in the air.

Chairman Jandreau has spoken eloquently regarding the desire to join the global market and seeking economic parity with the rest of America. I strongly agree and support those goals. But at Crow Creek, we must first achieve parity with Chamberlain, South Dakota, just twenty-five miles away. A small town of just 3,000 people, Chamberlain's unemployment rate is approximately the state average – 5 percent, while the rate at Crow Creek is over 80 percent.

For us to move forward, we must improve our infrastructure and create an environment that is conducive to human and economic progress. The Crow Creek Sioux Tribe Infrastructure Development Trust Fund Act enacted in 1996 (P.L. 104-223) awarded \$27.5 million to the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. Of the \$27.5 million, the Tribe is allowed to utilize the interest. The Tribal Parity Act would greatly enhance the trust fund, thus

increasing our available monies and allowing us to leverage with the private sector. The first year of the trust fund, we received slightly over a million dollars. Due to fluctuating interest rates, the yield has now dwindled to slightly over \$700,000, and is not a set or guaranteed yearly amount. We have utilized the interest to do a number of things to improve the situation of our people, including the following:

- Purchase a small school with a gymnasium in the Big Bend District – the furthest outlying district. We are able to provide Kindergarten through 6th grade education to students in that area, preventing the necessity of an hour-long bus ride each way to and from school;
- Construct a Community Building in the Crow Creek District, providing a place to gather for socializing, celebrations, and funerals;
- Construct a Community Building in the Fort Thompson District, utilized for community events, program presentations, wakes, weddings, dance, meetings, and as a polling place;
- Set a higher education program to assist students in college;
- Purchase land to increase the land base; and
- Improve damaged roads and upgrade our water plant.

These initiatives just begin to scratch the surface. The legislation we are discussing today, S.374, is intended to supplement our existing trust fund. As you know, it passed the Senate three times in the 108th Congress, both as a stand-alone bill and as an amendment. All three times the measure died in the House. The Tribal Parity Act was again reported by this Committee on June 29th, 2006, but has yet to come before the Senate for consideration.

The Army Corps of Engineers has estimated that the Pick-Sloan Project's overall contribution to the U.S. economy averages \$1.27 billion annually. According to the Western Area Power Administration, the agency that administers the Pick-Sloan Project, receipts from the project in 2006 are likely to total \$119 million and the same every year after. The \$69 million dollar increase to the trust fund requested in S. 374 (as amended)

would bring the trust fund balance to \$96 million – less than one year’s receipts the government receives from the Pick-Sloan Project.

The expanded trust fund would enable the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe to make not just significant, but magnificent strides in growth and development. Economic development and environmental improvements would change the lives of our people, our children, and all future generations of Crow Creek Sioux. It would assist in putting Reservations on parallel ground, enabling us to compete economically, with Chamberlain and the rest of the United States, as opposed to remaining in our current state, operating below the standards of most Third World Countries.

The recent GAO report entitled “Analysis of the Crow Creek Sioux and Lower Brule Sioux Tribes’ Additional Compensation Claims” criticizes the Tribes for not using “a final asking price.” Mr. Chairman, there is not a Tribe or Tribal member that could possibly place a monetary value on the loss and detrimental impact the Pick-Sloan Project has had on our people. “Official” documents use terms such as “Lake Sharpe” or “Lake Francis Case” to identify the land overtaken by the Pick-Sloan Project. In the every-day language of the Tribal people, the land is called “taken area” or “taken land.” **Because it was taken.** The land taken was the richest portion of our reservation. There were no offers or deals made to sell the land, and no assessment done to determine the value of the land. Even if there had been an assessment, the medicinal plants grown on the land and the Ceremonial Grounds hold a higher, non-monetary value. The devastation this has wrought still remains today for all to see.

The Crow Creek Sioux Tribe is consulting with experts such as Dr. Mike Lawson to estimate a monetary value, but his name or expertise is not mentioned in the GAO report. The compensation listed for Crow Creek Sioux Tribe in the Tribal Parity Act is not based on the highest asking price, or based on the price for the Santee Sioux, the Lower Brule Sioux, or any other Tribe. Each Tribe is unique, but what binds us together is our sovereignty. We are asking for the ability to maintain our sovereignty.

A Christian group visited the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, stating that they had read about the poverty on the Reservations and the fact that Crow Creek is in the poorest county in the America. After visiting, the group called the situation a **National Shame**. As Chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, I want to see the deplorable statistics change. I do not want our situation to remain a national shame. We are not asking for charity, for a handout, or even for your pity. We are not even asking for a helping hand. We are simply asking for fair and just compensation.

For the men, women, and children of the Crow Creek and Lower Brule Sioux Tribes, there is nothing more important right now than moving forward with the Tribal Parity Act. The new Tribal Council, including myself as Chairman, understands the challenges that lie ahead. Our reason for running for office and our daily motivation is to improve the situation and make a positive difference for the people of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. The Tribal Parity Act is an essential step in our efforts to reverse the downward trend and move forward. We urge the Committee to file the report and bring S. 374 to the Senate Floor for consideration as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before your Committee, and I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

STATEMENT
OF
CHAIRMAN MICHAEL B. JANDREAU
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
JUNE 14, 2006

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on the Tribal Parity Act, S. 374. I am Michael Jandreau, the Chairman of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe. I have been Chairman of the Tribe for twenty-seven years, and served on the Council for seven years before being elected Chairman.

The legislation before you this morning is of great importance to our tribe and our people. I would like to thank Senator Thune introducing the legislation, and Senator Johnson for cosponsoring. I am joined today by members of our Council, other tribal members, and our Counsel, Marshall Matz with the law firm of Olsson, Frank and Weeda.

The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe is a constituent band of the Great Sioux Nation and a signatory of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and the Fort Sully Treaty of 1865. The reservation is approximately 230,000 acres in central South Dakota. The Missouri River establishes the eastern boundary of the reservation. Historically, the Missouri's

bottomlands provided food, wood for shelter and fuel, forage for cattle and wildlife, and plants utilized for medical purposes.

In 1944, Congress enacted the Flood Control Act, which authorized implementation of the Missouri River Basin Pick-Sloan Plan for water development in the Missouri River Basin. Two of its main-stem dams, Fort Randall and Big Ben, flooded over 22,000 acres ---approximately 10% of the entire reservation and our best bottomland. In addition, it required the resettlement of nearly 70% of the resident population. For the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, the human and economic costs have far outweighed any benefits from the Pick-Sloan project.

The Congress responded in 1997 with the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe Infrastructure Development Trust Fund Act, Public Law 105-132. This legislation has been of enormous benefit to our people. It established a Trust Fund of \$39,300,000 for the benefit of the tribe. With this Fund, and using leverage, we invested over \$27 million in our entire infrastructure. We have built:

- A new community center,
- A tribal administration building,
- A detention center with a courthouse and police department, and a
- Wildlife building.

We have also used the fund to improve tribal housing and employ 250-270 individuals (both youth and adults) in the summer months. In short, the trust fund is allowing us to improve our economy and the quality of life on the reservation in many ways.

The legislation before you today, S. 374, is intended to supplement our existing trust fund. It passed the Senate three times in the 108th Congress, once as an independent bill and twice as an amendment to other bills. All three died in the House. The Parity Act was again reported by this Committee on June 30, 2005, but has yet to come before the entire Senate for consideration.

Mr. Chairman, in all honesty, I am completely baffled by the recent GAO report entitled “Analysis of the Crow Creek Sioux and Lower Brule Sioux Tribes’ Additional Compensation Claims”. It is the most frustrating government document I have read in all of my years as Chairman.

Essentially, the GAO makes two criticisms of the Tribal Parity Act and the approach used by our consultant, Dr. Mike Lawson. First, the GAO criticizes us (and it is, in fact, the Tribes that the GAO is criticizing) for not using “the final asking price”. Second, the GAO is indignant that Dr. Lawson suggests one level of compensation, and not a range. I would like to make several points in response:

1. The Congress never established the final asking price as the standard that must be used for determining what is fair compensation under the Flood Control Act. In a business transaction when two parties are negotiating with equal standing, I can

understand how the last asking price would indicate the true feelings of the parties. That is clearly not the case here. There was no “negotiation”. Our land had been flooded and we were trying to do the best we could. The Congress should look at all of the facts when trying to evaluate the appropriate level of compensation and not be blinded by the last offer.

2. GAO criticizes Dr. Lawson for not providing a range of reasonable compensation levels based upon different policy assumptions, but then the GAO does the same thing and fails to give you, the Congress, a range of possibilities.
3. Beyond the numbers, there is a tone to the GAO report that is deeply disturbing. Dr. Mike Lawson is a nationally recognized expert on the Flood Control Act and the Tribes affected by that legislation. Yet, the GAO does not even mention his name anywhere in the document. Dr. Lawson is a consultant to two sovereign Indian tribes. The GAO has every right to disagree with him, or with me, or with anyone else. But I would hope they also recognize that a mechanical application of a standard formula may not apply in all cases. The tribes are not one size fits all.

Our best land was taken to benefit America. Our Tribe is not seeking charity; we are seeking justice and parity with other Missouri River tribes that have been adversely affected by the Flood Control Act. There has been no one, clear policy decision by the Congress on how to determine what is just and fair compensation for Missouri River tribes. The Tribal Parity Act is not based upon the “highest asking price”. And we are not seeking Parity with the Santee Sioux, who has received the highest amount on a per

acre basis. We are seeking what Dr. Lawson, the recognized national expert, believes to be fair and owing from the United States to the people of Lower Brule. The Congress has the power and the obligation to make a fair policy decision. You are not bound by any one formula or test, as, I believe, the GAO would have you believe.

This legislation would, if enacted, add to our trust fund and allow us to aggressively attack the many human challenges we face on the reservation. Further, we could more adequately build our infrastructure to the point that it would be possible to attract a private sector economy.

As you know, sovereignty is key to tribal existence. But, in the long run, for sovereignty to survive, there must be some type of economic sovereignty as well. We must develop a private sector economy and jobs for our people. The legislation before you will allow us to do all of that. We will be able to improve education, health care, housing, transportation, the justice system, and so many other services.

As much as we need this legislation, let me stress that we are not asking for a handout. This legislation is intended to provide more complete compensation for the loss of our best land and other costs suffered by the Tribe. The Army Corps of Engineers has estimated that the Pick-Sloan project's overall contribution to the U.S. economy averages \$1.27 billion per year. The Tribal Parity Act must be seen in that context.

The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe is making great progress. Our unemployment rate is the lowest of any reservation in South Dakota, but it is still much above the national average. My goal as Chairman is to see Lower Brule fully participate in the United States economy while maintaining our heritage and identity. It is very painful for me to read The World Is Flat by Thomas Friedman and realize that globalization is passing over Lower Brule and the Indian reservations of the United States. China and India, for example, are revolutionizing their economy while Indian reservations are essentially ignored.

The reservations are a part of the United States, but we are not a part of the US economy. Mr. Chairman, I am not here today to outline a comprehensive agenda for Lower Brule or for tribes, generally. I am here to say that the Tribal Parity Act is the essential next step to improving the quality of life at Lower Brule and it is completely justified. We urge you to finally file the Committee report and bring it to the floor of the Senate as soon as possible. It has been exactly two years since I first testified on the Parity Act. Our Tribe needs and deserves the benefits of the Tribal Parity Act, as adjusted to reflect a more accurate mathematical computation.

We urge the Committee to amend S. 374 to provide \$129,822, 085 of additional compensation to Lower Brule and \$69,222,085 of additional compensation for Crow Creek. These figures are far lower than our highest asking price and are lower than the amount provided to the Santee. It is, in short, fair and just compensation for the complete

disruption to our reservation life and the taking of our best bottom lands. Thank you. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

**STATEMENT
OF
DUANE BIG EAGLE
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
JUNE 15, 2004**

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I am Duane Big Eagle, Chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in support of the Tribal Parity Act, S. 1530.

First, I would also like to thank Senator Daschle for the introduction of the legislation, and Senator Johnson for cosponsoring. The legislation before you this morning is of great importance to the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. We support it and urge its favorable consideration by the Committee and the Congress.

The Crow Creek Sioux Tribe is, like Lower Brule, a constituent band of the Great Sioux Nation and a signatory of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and the Fort Sully Treaty of 1865. The Missouri River establishes our western boundary, directly across the river from Lower Brule. The Big Bend Dam connects our two reservations and its

construction effected our two reservations in a similar manner. It flooded our best bottomlands and required us to relocate our town; for us that is Fort Thompson.

In 1996, the Congress enacted Public Law 104-223 creating the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe Infrastructure Development Trust Fund Act. It established a Trust Fund of \$27,500,000 for the benefit of the tribe. The legislation before you today, S. 1530, the Tribal Parity Act, would compliment that earlier law.

We are not seeking any advantage over any other tribe, just parity. The additional compensation called for in the Tribal Parity Act was computed by Dr. Lawson based on methodology used by the GAO for other tribes. The amount included in the legislation, was not computed by either the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe or the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe. It is the amount that Dr. Lawson has computed would bring us up to the standard used by the Congress for Cheyenne River.

Candidly, Mr. Chairman, our tribe needs every dollar that is fairly owed to us. Our unemployment rate is too high, our health problems are a significant barrier to progress, and our education and infrastructure systems are in need of great improvement.

With the interest on the trust fund, we could much more effectively meet the challenges we face on the reservation, and these challenges can not be overstated. We are a small tribe with great human needs. The Tribal Parity Act is vital to the progress and future of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe.

Mr. Chairman, we all know....painfully....the history of the reservations in the United States and the history of the Great Sioux Nation tribes, in particular. We are not near any major population center. We have a casino, as does Lower Brule, but that will never be a major source of income. For us to stand a chance, we must, at a minimum, be fairly compensated for the land that was taken by the Pick-Sloan. The \$78 million in the Parity bill for Crow Creek, if added to our current trust fund, would give us a trust fund of \$105 million. The interest on this trust fund would provide Crow Creek with the resources necessary to make a significant difference in the lives of our people and the lives of our children and grandchildren. It would, in short, give our Tribe a second chance. Thank you for your consideration. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

STATEMENT
OF
MICHAEL B. JANDREAU
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
JUNE 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on the Tribal Parity Act, S. 1530. I am Michael Jandreau, the Chairman of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe. I have been Chairman of the Tribe for twenty-five years.

The legislation before you this morning is of great importance to our tribe and our people. I would like to thank Senator Daschle for the introduction of the legislation, and Senator Johnson for cosponsoring. I am joined today by members of our Council, other tribal members, and our Counsel, Marshall Matz with the law firm of Olsson, Frank and Weeda.

The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe is a constituent band of the Great Sioux Nation and a signatory of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and the Fort Sully Treaty of 1865. The reservation is approximately 230,000 acres in central South Dakota. The Missouri River

establishes the eastern boundary of the reservation. Historically, the Missouri's bottomlands provided food, wood for shelter and fuel, forage for cattle and wildlife, and plants utilized for medical purposes. In 1804, Lewis and Clark traveled up the Missouri River, passing through our area during the month of September. Nothing has been the same since that time.

In 1944, Congress enacted the Flood Control Act, which authorized implementation of the Missouri River Basin Pick-Sloan Plan for water development in the Missouri River Basin. Two of its main-stem dams, Fort Randall and Big Ben, flooded over 22,000 acres ---approximately 10% of the entire reservation and our best bottomland. In addition, it required the resettlement of nearly 70% of the resident population. For the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, the human and economic costs have far outweighed any benefits from the Pick-Sloan project.

The Congress, under the leadership of this Committee, and in response to legislation introduced by Senator Daschle, responded in 1997 with the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe Infrastructure Development Trust Fund Act, Public Law 105-132. This legislation has been of enormous benefit to our people. It established a Trust Fund of \$39,300,000 for the benefit of the tribe. With this Fund, we have begun to revitalize our infrastructure. We built a new community center, tribal administration building, and wildlife building, among others. They are more than just buildings. It is allowing us to improve our economy and the quality of life on the reservation in many ways.

Legislation is now pending, S. 1530, the Tribal Parity Act, that would build upon the earlier law. As you have heard from Dr. Mike Lawson, the Tribal Parity Act is intended to do just that.....provide parity between the Missouri River Tribes. We are not seeking any advantage over any other tribe in the Great Sioux Nation, only equity and parity. The additional compensation called for in the Tribal Parity Act was computed by Dr. Lawson based on methodology used by the GAO for other tribes.

Our tribe is asking for this legislation because the United States should treat all tribes fairly and because of what it would mean for our people. It would, if enacted, add over \$147 million to our trust fund. With the interest on the trust fund, we could attack the many human challenges we face on the reservation. Further, we could more adequately build our infrastructure to the point that it would be possible to attract a private sector economy.

As you know, sovereignty is key to tribal existence. But, in the long run, for sovereignty to survive, there must be economic sovereignty as well. We must develop a private sector economy. The legislation before you will allow us to do all of that. We will improve education, health care, housing, transportation, the justice system, and so many other services.

As much as we need this legislation, let me stress that we are not asking for a hand out or charity. This legislation is intended to provide more complete compensation for the loss of our best land and other costs suffered by the Tribe. The Army Corps of Engineers has

estimated that the Pick-Sloan project's overall contribution to the national economy averages \$1.27 billion per year. S. 1530 should be seen in that context.

The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe is making great progress. Our unemployment rate is the lowest of any reservation in South Dakota, but it is still much above the national average. Our goal is to participate fully in the United States economy while maintaining our heritage and identity. We urge your support for S. 1530, the Tribal Parity Act. I would be pleased to answer any questions. Thank you very much.