14TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL

LEGISLATORS FORUM

JUNE 25-27, 2014 - MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

MANITOBA | MINNESOTA | NORTH DAKOTA | SOUTH DAKOTA

Acknowledging agriculture's historic and ongoing role as the leading economic engine in the region, the International Legislators Forum (ILF) Steering Committee partnered with the management and staff of RDO Equipment Company to provide a "Pre-Forum" event that focused on agriculture's current status and future opportunities. The afternoon and evening of Wednesday, June 25th were devoted to a series of presentations and "hands-on" opportunities.

In addition to a series of onsite demonstrations there was a reception and picnic supper that offered the RDO staff and ILF participants a chance to meet, greet and share information and ideas.

The event was capped off by a distinguished panel that discussed the current environment and future challenges of agriculture from the perspective of the producer, manufacturer, processor and consumer.

14th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATORS FORUM (ILF)

Wednesday, June 25 - Friday, June 27, 2014

Moorhead, Minnesota

June 25 through 27, 2014, thirty-three legislators representing North Dakota, South Dakota, Manitoba and Minnesota, along with support staff, experts, presenters, dignitaries and sponsors, gathered in Moorhead, Minnesota for the 14th International Legislators Forum - an annual opportunity for delegates to meet, share information, understand problems, build relationships, and develop collaborative approaches and solutions on a wide variety of issues relevant to and affecting the participating jurisdictions. The International Legislators Forum evolved from the International Flood Mitigation Initiative (IFMI) and its work developing agreements to mitigate flooding in the Red River Basin following the 1997 flood.

Through its annual meetings the Legislators have addressed a wide variety of issues related to water - quantity and quality; regional energy - production, transmission, and renewable fuels; human and animal health and food safety; methamphetamines and law enforcement; rural access to health care; broadband technology; outmigration and immigration; the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI); tourism; cross border trade; economic and workforce development; and other significant public policy issues. These efforts have resulted in agreements that have directly and indirectly impacted the region.

This year's Forum was hosted by the Minnesota delegation and focused on:

- **Agriculture** (current and future technologies, current and pending regulations and policy concerns);
- **Energy** (infrastructure, regulations, and developing technologies);
- **Workforce and economic development** (models and efforts to address current and future needs); and
- **Water** (updates, regulations and initiatives).

Presenters and panelists shared their expertise, offered topic specific information and engaged the delegates in follow-up discussions and interactions (PowerPoints, handouts, contact information and other materials specific to each presentation can be accessed at: **http://agree.org/ilf14/**). All presentations included facilitated discussion times that allowed delegates and experts to interact and discuss the topics more fully.

Wednesday, June 25, 2014

Pre-Forum Event – RDO Equipment Company - Moorhead, MN

"Technology and the Future of Agriculture – It's Not Your Grandfather's Farm"

The Forum began with a special pre-Forum event hosted and sponsored by the RDO Equipment Company that explored the current and anticipated developments in technology that have and will affect farming and food production. Participants spent the afternoon engaged in a variety of presentations, tours and demonstrations featuring the newest and most innovative agriculture-related technologies utilizing the expertise of the RDO staff and management.

Senator **Kent Eken** and Representative **Dan Fabian**, representing Minnesota's delegation to the ILF Steering Committee; **Steve Connelly**, Vice President, Midwest Agriculture; **Keith McGovern**, CEO; and Moorhead Mayor, **Del Rae Williams**, provided welcomes. RDO staff and team leaders included **Todd Thompson**, General Manager, Northern Red River Valley; **Joel Kaczynski**, Product Specialist Manager; and **Greg Frazier**, Division Sales Manager, John Deere Electronic Solutions.

Opening Reception – RDO Equipment

An opening reception and a picnic supper were provided by RDO in their shop.

Agriculture Policy Panel

The day was capped by a distinguished panel that shared their thoughts and observations regarding the current and potential opportunities, and policy-related challenges and barriers in the next decade from individuals representing the four major sectors of the agricultural economy:

- Producers – **Keith McGovern**, CEO, R.D. Offutt Company
- Processors – **Brian Ingulsrud**, American Crystal Sugar
  Neil Juhnke, Northstar Agri Industries
- Manufacturers – **Howard Dahl**, Amity Technology
- Consumers – **Karen Ehrens**, Ehrens Consulting

The panel was followed by a facilitated discussion.

Opening

Senator **Kent Eken** and Representative **Dan Fabian**, Minnesota (host representatives on the ILF Steering Committee) welcomed the delegates and observers. The legislators completed a round of self-introductions and the meeting process and rules, the agenda and meeting materials were reviewed *(Note: This is the first year that the Forum has utilized a fully electronic/digital approach to meeting materials and handouts. These materials were provided to the meeting participants on a flash drive or were accessible directly on the Consensus Council's website - www.agree.org)*. The history and purpose of the Forum were reviewed and dignitaries, sponsors, work group members and presenters were recognized and thanked for their commitment of time and talent.

Plenary Sessions

Energy Issues

Delegates have expressed an ongoing interest in Federal regulatory policy (Canada and the U.S.) to reduce power plant carbon emissions, state and provincial policies to encourage renewable energy and energy efficiency, rapidly rising oil production, and the needs for extensive infrastructure development, all of which are driving a transformation of the region's energy sector. The morning's energy speakers offered their perspectives on these challenges and an outline of how companies, agencies and individuals are responding to them. **William Hamlin**, Manager, Energy Policy & Analysis, Manitoba Hydro, moderated these sections.

Section #1: Senior executives from two of the region's leading power companies discussed their companies' strategies and efforts to deliver affordable, reliable power to customers, while diversifying their generation portfolios, increasing energy efficiency and responding to emerging federal regulations, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) recently proposed rule to regulate carbon emissions from existing power plants (Note: Mr. Olsen provided an overview of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's - EPA - existing regulations and the process for public input and review).

- **Margaret Hodnik**, Vice President, Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, ALLETE
- **Eric Olsen**, General Counsel and Vice President for Governmental Affairs, Great River Energy (GRE)

Section #2: This panel provided an opportunity for delegates to learn more about how capturing CO_2 from power plants can provide a win-win solution for reducing power sector carbon emissions, while enhancing long-term oil production in the region. Additionally, the delegates heard energy company and landowner views regarding energy and infrastructure development and its impact on producers/transporters and owners/stewards of the land.

- **Michael Holmes**, Deputy Associate Director for Research, Energy and Environmental Research Center (EERC), University of North Dakota. Mr. Holmes reviewed the current status of CO_2 capture technology from power plants, its deployment and potential utilization to increase oil recovery from the Bakken and traditional oil fields in the region. Mr. Holmes also provided an overview of the purpose and work of the EERC.
- **Derrick Braaten**, Attorney at Law, Baumstark Braaten Law Partners. Mr. Braaten provided a landowners perspective on the effects and impacts (positive and negative) of energy development and distribution on landowners, including transmission and pipeline siting, rights-of-way, owner rights and associated issues.

• **Richard L. Kern**, Supervisor, LP Land Services, Enbridge Energy Company Inc.

Mr. Kern shared the view and perspective of a corporation involved in pipeline development in the region regarding the process and challenges of siting, rights-of-way and landowner negotiations.

Luncheon

Luncheon Address – *"Global Agricultural Realities Shaping Regional Agricultural Policies"*

Dr. Brian Buhr, Dean of the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS), University of Minnesota, provided an overview of the global factors (current and developing) that affect and shape agricultural policies and production in this region.

Economic/Workforce Development

Efforts to improve and expand the local and regional economy through economic development and address the surging demand and pressure to meet the needs for a well-trained and qualified workforce continue throughout the region. The Forum provided specific examples of initiatives and programs that are currently underway in the various jurisdictions.

Section #1: A review of perspectives and unique projects that address current and future economic and workforce development issues and opportunities.

• **James Gartin**, President, Greater Fargo/Moorhead Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC), outlined and described the recently initiated Valley Prosperity Partnership (VPP).

• **Nathan Dorr**, Grants Officer, Northwest Minnesota Foundation (NWMF), shared information about the projects, programs and activities of the foundation to address the support needs - "Soft Infrastructure" - for a developing and expanding workforce in NW Minnesota.

• **Lisa Gulland Nelson**, Vice President of Marketing & Public Relations, Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC), presented on the community, education and industry partnership in the Fargo/Moorhead area to provide a relevant and coordinated approach to preparing the workforce of the future.

Section #2: An overview of programs underway in Manitoba for effective and efficient recognition and licensing of internationally educated professionals, encouraging and supporting labour mobility within the existing workforce and discussion of potential cross-jurisdictional licensing and certification for workers.

• **Mona Pandey**, Manager, Labour Market Information Unit- Policy, Planning and Coordination, Manitoba Jobs and the Economy

• **Robert Millman**, Planning and Policy, Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner, Manitoba Labour and Immigration

Reception and Dinner

Thursday evening was highlighted by an ILF reception and dinner graciously sponsored by the Canadian Consul.

In addition to an opportunity to interact and network with colleagues and peers, the participants received remarks from **Brian Shipley**, Consul and Head, Foreign Policy & Diplomacy Service, Consulate General of Canada, Minneapolis, Minnesota, who shared his thoughts and observations from

an historical perspective on the friendship and economic partnership between Canada and the United States. **Timothy Cipullo**, Consul and Principal Officer, United States Consulate, Winnipeg, Manitoba, addressed the delegates and attendees sharing his perspective on his experiences in his role as U.S. Consul and his plans for the future (Consul Cipullo is up for rotation and will be reassigned - we appreciate his friendship and support over the past four years and will miss him - we hope he will stay in touch and look forward to a similar relationship with his successor).

Senator **Tom Saxhaug** (MN), and the Honourable **Peter Bjornson** (MB), were recognized for their work and commitment to the ILF steering committee and were presented with tokens of the Forum's appreciation.

Friday, June 27, 2014

Breakfast - Legislators (Only) Breakfast

As has become tradition, Friday morning began with a "Legislators Only Breakfast" - an opportunity for the legislative delegates to engage, socialize, share their ideas and concerns, and explore options for agreements and potential approaches and answers to the questions that confront them. This is a non-facilitated event that allows for candid discussions in preparation for the development of the Forum's conclusions, agreements and recommendations.

Water Issues

Water was the genesis of the ILF and, once again, the delegates chose to visit the topic from a "basin-wide" perspective. During recent Forums the delegates, and ultimately the Steering Committee have embraced the need to recognize and address issues and relationships between the Missouri River basin and the Red River Basin. The effects of the Clean Water Act Interpretive Rule - Section 404(f)(1)(A) exemption clarification, specifically the Memorandum of Understanding, Interpretation and Implementation - and the effects of the U.S. Farm Bill on water practices were addressed. Additionally, delegates were provided with updates on the status, developments and initiatives within and affecting the Red River basin.

Section #1: Interpretation and Implementation of the 404(f)(1)(A) MOU.

- **Desiree Morningstar**, Acting Chief, Northwest Section, Regulatory Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (St. Paul)
- **Ryan Galbreath**, State Conservationist, Minnesota Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- **Robert Sip**, Environmental Policy Specialist, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Section #2: The Red River Basin - Water quality, availability, flood mitigation, and the influence of the Farm Bill.

- Fargo/Moorhead Diversion Update – **Keith Berndt**, Cass County Administrator, and member of the FM Diversion Authority Land Management Committee
- Distributive Storage and Water Quality – **Lance Yohe**, President, Trans Basin Solutions
- The Red River and the Farm Bill – **Ryan Galbreath**, State Conservationist, Minnesota Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Lake Friendly Accord and Stewards Alliance, and Invasive Species (Zebra Mussels) – Honourable **Gord Mackintosh**, Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship, Province of Manitoba

From the Floor - Delegate Conclusions and Recommendations

The delegates to the 2014 International Legislators Forum identified and agreed upon the following items relative to the respective general and specific topics:

AGRICULTURE

Conclusions and Recommendations

The delegates of the 2014 International Legislators' Forum:

- **NOTE** the lack of uniformity and consistency in truck transportation regulations state-to-state and country-to-country (weight limits & axle, etc.); and **RECOMMEND** that efforts be initiated to convene a regional summit to study current and future highway transportation needs, including uniform truck transportation regulations that emphasize safety, efficiency and consistency for the purpose of consideration and potential adoption by participating jurisdictions.

- **RECOGNIZE** the need for improved infrastructure throughout the region, particularly in the rural areas.

- **AGREE** that a comprehensive assessment of the current and future infrastructure needs (including electronics and digital infrastructure, such as cell phone service and broadband Internet access) be completed with the intent of developing a long-term, coordinated approach to addressing the gaps and barriers.

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** the need to regulate and control the level of flaring of natural gas; and **RECOMMEND** the development of an incentives-driven plan to develop, transport and utilize this resource throughout the region with emphasis on agricultural and rural impacts, needs (fertilizer, replacement option for propane, etc.) and utilization.

- **SUPPORT** the significant role and importance of agriculture and related industries to the regional, national and international economies, recognizing:
    - That the global population continues to increase steadily (estimated to reach 9.5 billion by 2050) and that demand for food will increase concurrently;
    - That broad and specific efforts are necessary to expand the production capabilities and conservation practices of farmers and land stewards to help them to meet the projected global demand; and
    - That planning should include consideration of potential long-term, unintended results allowing for agreements and programs (perpetual easements, rights-of-way, etc.) to be flexible and negotiable with consideration for the environment and the landowner.

- **NOTE** that the United States Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulations and Section 404 implementation plans may have significant impacts upon agricultural land usage; and **AFFIRM** that the United States Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should endeavor to ascertain and respond to the concerns and opinions of citizens, businesses and political jurisdictions through a process that is as transparent, flexible and as responsive as possible.

- **AGREE** that there should be more awareness of these potential concerns at all levels of government (including regional organizations such as the Western Governors' Association) and more attention should be directed to impact concerns of implementation.

ENERGY

Conclusions and Recommendations

The delegates of the 2014 International Legislators' Forum:

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** the differences in approaches that utilities are and have been adopting relative to a mix of fossil and renewable fuels in the production and supply of electricity ("balanced portfolios," including the continued use of coal).

- **REITERATE** the energy conclusions and recommendations as identified and specified as part of their work during the 2013 International Legislators Forum:
  June 26-28, 2013 - International Legislators Forum
  "The delegates of the 2013 International Legislators Forum:
    - ***Support and recommend*** *the development of clear, consistent, and stable energy policies and regulations that integrate <u>all</u> energy supply options and are market-driven, efficient and technologically sound – such policies should consider and include;*
        - *Certainty – allow the energy industry to establish long range investment and planning strategies;*

- *Careful Consideration – evaluate policies, regulations and mandates for their broader effects, including neighboring jurisdictions and the potential of unintended consequences;*
- *Attainability – identify and promote those initiatives and activities that are reasonably attainable;*
- *Harmonization – consider and address the potential of compatibility to existing laws, policies and regulations, and support consistency, collaboration and cooperative efforts to remove barriers wherever possible;*
- *Environmental Responsibility – seek a balance between the environmental concerns and the social, economic and financial impacts;*
- *Affordability – support efficiency through cost/benefit considerations;*
- *Sustainability – assess the long-term potential of policies and the likelihood of their ability to be maintained into the foreseeable future;*
- *Conservation – promote the sensible, integrated use of energy conservation methods and practices in all aspects of planning and policy development; and*
- *Technology – explore and support the identification, development and use of readily available and potential technologies.*

o ***Recognize*** *the inter-connection/dependence of the energy system, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally and* ***support*** *the need to collaborate and plan together on all of those levels.*

o *Reiterate their* ***support*** *for the recognition of hydro as a renewable energy source."*

- **NOTE** the recent draft rule from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - the Clean Power Plan - promulgated to regulate carbon emissions from existing power plants; and **SUPPORT** the implementation of power-plant emissions rules that are consistent with the 2013 ILF statement on energy policy.

- **SUPPORT** continued research, development and utilization of CO_2 capture options and technologies such as those identified and being developed and deployed by the Energy and Environmental Research Center (EERC) at the University of North Dakota.

ECONOMIC/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Conclusions and Recommendations

The delegates of the 2014 International Legislators' Forum:

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** the changing workforce in the region, including the declining participation of Baby Boomers in the labor force, the increasing need for specifically qualified workers and professionals, and the need for government and the private sector to be more responsive to the immediate and long-term demand for well-trained workers and professionals; and **SUPPORT** the continued efforts to grow and develop the local labor pool, emphasizing immediate (quick) as well as long-term sustainable work force development initiatives, including:

  o Providing relevant career-focused education programs, opportunities and career-focused counseling;

  o Public/private partnerships to provide affordable, livable housing and other related "soft" infrastructure and support services to workers and their families, as well as the provision of quality, affordable childcare; and

  o Collaborative efforts of business and education professionals to identify and address needs, gaps and opportunities.

- **RECOGNIZE** and **ACKNOWLEDGE** the complexity of immigration policies and regulations.

- **RECOGNIZE** immigration as a potential source of skilled and professional workers; and **SUPPORT** efforts to grow and develop this labor pool.

- **NOTE** that further study may be necessary and beneficial regarding the licensing professionals, specifically the recognition of foreign credentials while ensuring public safety; and **AGREE** to include immigration as a topic on the agenda for the 2015 International Legislators Forum.

WATER

Conclusions and Recommendations

The delegates of the 2014 International Legislators' Forum:

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** the initiative and progress that has been and continues to be made to improve water quantity management and water quality in the Red River Basin, including the Lake Friendly Accord initiative.

- **PROMOTE** the sharing of "lessons learned" in the Red River Basin as a potential "best practice" model for other regions and jurisdictions.

- **SUPPORT** the current and expanded efforts throughout the region to address the continuum of concerns related to water issues, in particular the use of a basin-wide approach in the following areas:
    - Supply (availability and usage throughout the wet/dry cycles);
    - Quality (general and specific);
    - Flood Mitigation and Management;
    - Partnerships (coordination and collaboration);
    - Wildlife and Environment;
    - Invasive Species; and
    - Other Relevant and Related Issues.

- **AGREE** to explore more deeply the issues, concerns and role of the Missouri River Basin.

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** concerns regarding the potential impact of the Clean Water Act Interpretive Rule - Section 404(f)(1)(A) exemption clarification Memorandum of Understanding; and **AFFIRM** that the United States Environmental Protection Agency should endeavor to obtain and respond to the input and opinions of citizens, local and state governments and businesses through an open, flexible and responsive process.*

- **SUPPORT** ongoing collaborative, local, regional, national and international research, efforts and initiatives to identify and address problems developing regarding invasive species.

** Note: The process for input is limited and will close in the next several weeks. The delegates requested that staff from the Consensus Council contact representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to explore the potential for timely outreach to the region regarding the Input process. It was also suggested that ILF representatives (to the extent that they are comfortable) initiate contacts with their jurisdictional government administrations and governmental representatives at the Federal level to encourage their awareness and involvement.*

General Recommendations and Suggestions

The delegates of the 2014 International Legislators' Forum discussed and noted:

- Childcare issues as they relate to availability, regulation, quality, safety, affordability and the impact upon workforce were discussed. It was noted that there are a number of successful, policy-related models throughout the region and Manitoba's approach was specifically noted. This sparked additional discussion about early childhood education and service/support needs that are increasing as the "Boomer" population ages. Because these issues were not presentation topics for the Forum, the delegates were neither in a position nor were they comfortable developing any recommendations. They did, however, ask that these issues along with housing (workforce, affordable, accessible), and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles - UAV - (their role and regulation), infrastructure issues (roads, bridges, pipelines, digital and electronic), and a continuation of discussions regarding the agricultural economy (and related issues - transportation and environmental regulations) be considered by the steering committee for inclusion as presentation topics for 2015.

Wrap-Up

The Steering Committee members, the Minnesota host delegation, the working groups, the sponsors, the Canadian and U.S. Consuls and their staff, and the many others who assisted in planning and presenting the 2014 International Legislators Forum were identified and thanked. Participants were asked to complete and submit their evaluation forms.

Adjournment

Participants were advised that:

- The 2015 International Legislators Forum will be hosted by South Dakota.
- June 24-26, 2015 are the tentative dates.
- The 2014/2015 Steering Committee will meet on Thursday, September 18, 2014, at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Moorhead, MN.

Box lunches were provided and the 2014 International Legislators Forum was officially adjourned with a wish to all for safe travels and an enjoyable and productive summer.

Media Conference

Representative **Dan Fabian** (MN), Senator **Kent Eken** (MN), MLA **Dennis Smook** (MB), and Senator **Larry Luick** (ND), met with media representatives from the Fargo/Moorhead area. They provided an overview of the Forum and identified the benefits and opportunities of the annual event.

2014 International Legislators Forum Jurisdictional Delegates

Manitoba

*Hon. **Gord Mackintosh** (NDP) – MLA for St. Johns

Drew Caldwell (NDP) – Brandon East

Hon. **David Chomiak** (NDP) – MLA for Kildonan

David Gaudreau (NDP) – MLA for St. Norbert

Ralph Eichler (PC) – MLA for Lakeside

Shannon Martin (PC) – MLA for Morris

Thomas Nevakshonoff (NDP) - MLA for Interlake (unable to attend)

Blaine Pedersen (PC) – MLA for Midland

***Dennis Smook** (PC) - MLA for LaVerendrye

Minnesota

*Senator **Kent Eken** (DFL) – District 04

Senator **William "Bill" Ingebrigtsen** (R) – District 08 (unable to attend)

Senator **Tom Saxhaug** (DFL) - District 05

Senator **Rod Skoe** (DFL) – District 02

Senator **William "Bill" Weber** (R) – District 22

*Representative **Dan Fabian** (R) - District 01A

Representative **Ben Lien** (DFL)- District 04A

Representative **Jason Metsa** (DFL) - District 06B (unable to attend)

Representative **Chris Swedzinski** (R) - District 21A (unable to attend)

** Identifies Members of the ILF Steering Committee*

North Dakota

Senator **Joan Heckaman** (D) - District 23

Senator **Larry Luick** (R) - District 25

Senator **Philip Murphy** (D) District 20

*Senator **Ronald Sorvaag** (R) - District 45

*Representative **Lois Delmore** (D) - District 43 (unable to attend)

Representative **Curt Hofstad** (R) - District 15

Representative **Kathy Hogan** (D) District 21

Representative **Dennis Johnson** (R) - District 15

Representative **David Monson** (R) - District 10

South Dakota

*Senator **Larry Tidemann** (R) - District 7 (unable to attend)

Senator **Chuck Welke** (D) – District 02

Representative **James "Jim" Bolin** (R) - District 16

Representative **Mary Duvall** (R) - District 24

Representative **Spencer Hawley** (D) - District 7

Representative **Scott Parsley** (D) - District 08

Representative **Jim Peterson** (D) – District 04 (unable to attend)

Representative **Roger Solum** (R) - District 05

Representative **Kathy Tyler** (D) – District 04

*Representative **Susan Wismer** (D) - District 1

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LEGISLATORS' FORUM 2001-2014

Over the years, the delegates have found that their jurisdictions have mutual concerns and similarities (even across an international boundary) and that programs and efforts that originate in one jurisdiction to deal with public policy issues can be useful in other jurisdictions.

The discussions during the annual meetings have transcended politics and ideology and have been practical and common sense in their approaches. Additionally, the delegates have formed long-lasting friendships that have enabled them to stay in touch and to help each other deal with their shared challenges.

- **Secured** a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from respective legislative leaders in all four jurisdictions to continue the annual meetings.

- **Learned** about differences in structure and process in the respective states and provinces.

- **Learned** that the delegates share many of the same issues and values and wish to learn more from each other about best practices for addressing them together.

- **Interacted** annually with the Canadian Consul General, based in Minneapolis, and the US Consul and Principal Officer in Winnipeg, both of whom have been significant supporters of the LF efforts.

• **Shared** information and agreements reached at the LF meetings with the federal governments in both countries through the respective Consuls.

• **Sponsored** and helped initiate what became "2Nation Tours," involving the travel and tourism agencies of all four jurisdictions.

• **Supported** the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), especially in the states because it is aimed at enhancing the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in the US.

• **Supported** the establishment of a 600-mile "Greenway" from the source of the Red River and on its tributaries to its termination in Lake Winnipeg. The efforts to develop it have expanded and continue today.

• **Supported** the Prairie Public Television/Radio "River Watch" program, which was linked to the Greenway and other flood control and mitigation efforts throughout the region and helped to secure multiple years of funding for that program, as well as the Greenway, from the Otto Bremer Foundation.

• **Discussed** mutual water quality issues and the many water quality problems that are shared among the jurisdictions and **agreed** that it will be essential to work together to address those issues.

• **Advanced** the discussion about the enhancement of renewable fuels and energy transmission capacity in the region, which was responsible, in significant part, for the work done by the Great Plains Institute (GPI), Powering the Plains (PTP) process and the work of the Midwest Governors Association.

• **Encouraged** agricultural harmonization legislation and regulation at the national levels in both countries and contacted the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) in support of the work of the Agriculture Harmonization Working Group and broadening, expediting and prioritizing that work.

• **Supported** pilot projects for pesticide labeling applicable across US and Canadian borders - now applied to 3 pesticides.

• **Authored** letters of support to appropriate agencies in the US and Canadian federal governments to encourage the adoption of a regional inter-jurisdictional action process in case of disease outbreak to ensure the containment and quick eradication of these outbreaks in the region. These included handling food safety and security in an economical and efficient manner by using inter-jurisdictional expertise and scientific technology and brought responsible agency people from all four jurisdictions together between several annual LF meetings to begin their work together in this area.

• **Supported** an emergency management mutual aid agreement and emergency management experts working together across borders.

• **Facilitated** a meeting of the three Attorneys General and the Justice Minister to provide updates on inter-jurisdictional criminal justice issues, progress on dealing with methamphetamine, and to sign an agreement to develop an "Amber Alert" system throughout the four jurisdictions to assure quick, coordinated service in the event of child abductions.

• **Supported** inter-jurisdictional sharing of best practices in "healthy living."

• **Supported** greater rural access to medicine to ensure access to appropriate health care for all citizens in the region.

• **Encouraged** the public and private sectors in this region to work together to enhance broadband technology and other infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

• **Supported** a regional effort to enhance rural and community development, beyond simply economic development and including support for immigration.

• **Contacted** the Department of Homeland Security, other relevant agencies and states' Congressional offices and **requested** that they ensure border crossings for citizens in the US and Canada remain as seamless as possible. Emphasizing the belief that the two countries share so much in terms of history, culture, mutual relations and issues that: "Whatever decisions are made with regard to implementation (of cross-border identification requirements), there needs to be sufficient time to develop a thorough, comprehensive and accurate cost-benefit analysis of all proposed solutions; sufficient time to implement the regulations; and sufficient time to ensure that all privacy concerns are adequately addressed. Finally, the regulations need to be affordable by states and provinces and their citizens." The delegates share a belief that their input has had a significant impact on achieving the delay and reconsideration of many border-crossing identification regulations.

• **Recommended** the development of mutually supportive research and development initiatives and agreements that would clarify and enhance collaborative efforts.

• **Agreed** that water issues relative to the Red and Missouri Rivers be considered and addressed from a "basin-wide" perspective.

• **Acknowledged and supported** trade and border policies that foster cooperation, coordination, collaboration and are efficient, effective and economical.

• **Supported** a forward-looking process to assess and address infrastructure (including digital and broadband) needs throughout the region.

• **Recommended** a comprehensive review of existing highway transportation regulations and needs; and **supported** the development of consistent, comprehensive region-wide guidelines.

• **Supported** collaborative efforts to identify and address the threat of invasive species in the region.

• **Recommended** the adoption and integration of education/training and immigration policies that support the region's workforce needs.

• **Developed** a set of general principles regarding energy development and related policies.

• **Recognized** the interconnection and logic of dealing with water issues on a basin-wide level and **supported** cooperative, coordinated and collaborative basin-wide and basin-to-basin efforts.

LEGISLATORS' FORUM ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS/FOCUS

During all annual meetings of the Legislators Forum, water issues have been a topic of conversation in the context of flooding, drought and water quality. In addition, each year has had a specific focus and at least one highlight issue. Those issues have included:

MB 2001—Sponsorship of 2Nation Tours, a travel and tourism program among the four jurisdictions.

MN 2002—Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among legislative leaders in the four jurisdictions to meet annually and provide substantial support for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Programs (and analogous programs in Canada) in order to address flooding, drought and water quality issues.

SD 2003—Establishment of a regional renewable fuels working group called Powering the Plains (PTP) and beginning efforts to bring emergency management officials from the four jurisdictions together to enhance cooperation and coordination across borders.

ND 2004—Beginning of significant efforts to study methamphetamine and pharmaceutical issues across borders in order to address addiction issues and alternatives to incarceration.

MB 2005—Building on the agreements to address methamphetamine issues across borders, broadened the discussion to include collaboratively addressing all inter-jurisdictional criminal justice issues.

MN 2006—Emphasized the importance of basing water related public policy issues on sound science. Supported the efforts of the four jurisdictions' Attorneys General to address methamphetamine and criminal justice issues and their signing of an inter-jurisdictional Amber Alert MOU to enhance mobilization in the case of child abduction.

SD 2007—Provided broad support for the Regional Energy Roadmap that had been developed by the PTP participants, supported the enhancement of broadband technology, especially in rural areas of the four jurisdictions and expressed significant concerns to the US Department of Homeland Security and other relevant US and Canadian entities about the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI).

ND 2008—Highlighted issues related to rural community development, health and infrastructure issues, including the need for further enhancement of broadband technology in the region and continued the ongoing discussions of water (LIDAR mapping), energy and cross-border identification issues.

MB 2009—While specifically focusing on Lake Winnipeg, the delegates developed agreements to address regional water quality and quantity issues, regional energy issues and cross-border security, identification and tourism.

MN 2010 – Discussions centered on water issues in the Red River basin and included recommendations and requests from the Red River Basin Commission regarding management, impoundment, retention and diversion. Energy, commerce, border security and the media were also highlighted.

SD 2011 – In addition to updates and discussion on the developments in the Red River Basin, the focus of the Forum was on research and development efforts within the four jurisdictions and the existing and potential opportunities for collaborative initiatives.

ND 2012 – The Forum focused on energy (integrated regulations); water (basin-wide collaboration); and trade (coordination and harmonization of regulations and policies).

MB 2013 - Delegates addressed the existing economic relationships throughout the region and explored options to support and expand opportunities to leverage the regional and cross-border relationships to strengthen the economic future of all the jurisdictions. Additionally, the delegates outlined a set of general principles regarding energy development and related policies.

PHOTO GALLERY

More 2014 ILF Photos available at the website: www.agree.org/ilf

THANK YOU!

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