



Joint Committee on Appropriations
REPRESENTATIVE MIKE DERBY, CO-CHAIR
SENATOR ERNIE OTTEN, CO-CHAIR

April 30, 2026

Commissioner of School and Public Lands

Pierre, SD 57501

Letter of Intent Regarding Richmond Lake Dam Progress Updates

Dear ,

This Letter of Intent sets forth a particular view held by the Joint Committee on Appropriations (JCA) in approving your appropriation in the 2026 Legislative session. As such, this Letter of Intent seeks to supplement that legislation with specific policy guidance as approved on April 30, 2026.

While the guidance does not have the direct force of statutory law, it rests solidly on a long-standing tradition of Legislative-Executive relationships in South Dakota and it will be used by the Joint Committee as one basis for the fiscal oversight of your agency and its continued funding.

During the 2026 session, the Legislature approved SB 121, which appropriated an additional \$8,212,497 for the Richmond Lake Dam project. This amount is in addition to what was appropriated via SB 52 in 2022 (\$6.5 million in general funds), SB 70 in 2024 (\$3.15 million in general funds and \$10.65 million in federal expenditure authority, of which the agency received \$2.94 million), and HB 1026 in 2025 (\$13.05 million in general funds). Initially, the estimated total cost for this project was \$23 to \$27 million, but after a March 27, 2026, bid opening, the cost is now estimated at \$34,891,893.

It is the intent of the JCA that the Commissioner report construction progress and expenses for the Richmond Lake Dam project during both the committee's July and December meetings each year until all funds and authority appropriated for the project have been expended.

Thank you for your cooperation.

/s/ MIKE DERBY
Representative Mike Derby
Lead Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Appropriations

/s/ ERNIE OTTEN
Senator Ernie Otten
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Appropriations

cc: Russell Olson, Auditor General

Jim Terwilliger, Commissioner, Bureau of Finance and Management