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Members of the Funding Sub-Committee:

I'm not sure how the latest political shuffling will impact our task but it will later to some extent. Gov Johanns was fully aware of all the details of the Task Force activities and the critical need for funding. I'm not sure how aware the new Governor-in-Waiting is of the situation regarding water, or lack thereof, in Nebraska. I would appreciate any suggestions from you about the most effective and efficient way to bring him up to speed on the need for adequate, consistent funding to carry out the many facets of LB 962, including possible compensation or incentives.

One part of my plan for this sub-committee has not changed. I was planning on sending you a request for your thoughts on our "charge" by the committee. My interpretation is that we are to review all possible avenues of funding to address the needs created by LB 962. To me the first priority is to obtain the resources so that the administrative functions involved can continue to move forward. If the Gov-in-Waiting understands, and is supportive of, the need to provide the resources to implement and carry out LB962, we can probably count on his help to obtain the basic \$4.7M that was included in last year's request. We will also have to work with the Chairs of the Revenue and Appropriations committees to try to garner their support.

The rest of our charge, as I see it, is to come back to the Executive Committee and then to the full Task Force with suggestions for funding to address incentives, compensation, and critical research to assist the DNR, NRDs, Irrigation Districts and other entities that must make decisions on the best way to fully utilize our water resources without degrading them for future generations.

I assume that to each of us that sounds like a fairly simple task as I have heard all of you and myself express ideas for accomplishing the acquisition of funds. However, I also know that we all have differing ideas of the best way, or ways to do this and so do the rest of the task force members. Our task as I see it is to seek out and study all possible avenues and then try to come up with a package of options that is feasible, politically and socially, to provide long term stability to the process.

As I said above, I would like to hear from each of you regarding your assessment of our challenge. When we all agree on that matter, we can then start to put together ideas for reaching the goal. I anticipate a meeting in January. I'd really like to get started sooner but I don't think anyone has much time before the first of the year that doesn't already have double or triple demands on every segment of that time. I hope that we can take care of some of the preliminary exchange of ideas through letters or phone calls before we meet to hammer out the details.

I have everyone's e-mail address except Gloria Ericson and Clayton Lukow so will use that method of communication primarily.

Have a Merry Christmas.

Eugene