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Letter from Representative Burdick to W.S. Davidson Regarding Retaining Kingman Brewster as a Lawyer, May 6, 1949

Usher Burdick

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May 6, 1949.

*Harrison
Reclamation*

Mr. W. S. Davidson,
Williston, North Dakota.

Dear Bill:

Kingman Brewster, one of the outstanding lawyers here in Washington, has become very much interested in the Williston case and he thinks that he has pull enough to get the Army Engineers to pull in their horns and build the dam with a reservoir of 17 million acre-feet as the law provides; cease buying land for a higher level, and return the land already purchased for that higher level.

I don't know whether he can do anything or not. It's a gamble. So far as keeping the limitation in the appropriation bill for another two years, I am satisfied that Lenke and I can do it, as we have just come from a conference with the Members who will be on the conference committee and the House conferees seem to be solid in demanding that the limitation be contained in the bill.

If, however, Brewster can get the Army Engineers, from the top, to get down off their high-horse and proceed according to law, it might help us and we would not have to come back here every time there is an appropriation. He will do what he can, but of course he is in the business of practicing law and wants fees.

I think it would be a good investment to take a chance on giving him a \$500 retainer and another \$500 if he can do anything. He and Wheeler first wanted a retainer of \$10,000 but I told him I wouldn't submit that to you people.

I just talked this over with Harry Palk and he seems to think that it is a good investment to try this out with Brewster and I am passing it along to you to do as you think best. I am enclosing in this letter the first letter from Brewster which I do not recommend, but for your information.

Sincerely,

Usher L. Burdick, m.c.