As Co-Chair, I make the following motion – that MRCTI purposefully pursue the formulation of a Mississippi River Compact for the ten-state corridor that will protect the freshwater resources of the Main Stem and sustain the environmental services provided by such resources. Is there any discussion on this motion? If no further discussion, may we have a second? With that, we can vote.¹

Motion – Mayor Strickland

The Argument for a Mississippi River Compact Similar to the Great Lakes Compact:²

The Great Lakes Compact, signed into law in 2008, stands as a model for water resource management and protection. It serves as a strong example of how neighboring states can come together to address critical issues surrounding shared water bodies.

In light of this success, there is a compelling argument for the creation of a Mississippi River Compact, designed to address the complex challenges and opportunities presented by this iconic river.

1. **Shared Resource Management**: Like the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River is a vital waterway that flows through multiple states, each with distinct interests and needs. Establishing a compact would allow these states to collectively manage the river’s resources and ensure that it is protected for both current and future generations.

2. **Conservation and Sustainability**: A Mississippi River Compact could focus on conservation efforts and sustainability practices to safeguard the river’s ecosystem. This includes measures to prevent pollution, manage water levels, and protect habitats, all of which are crucial for the river’s health.

3. **Disaster Preparedness and Response**: The Mississippi River basin is susceptible to natural disasters such as floods and droughts. A compact would facilitate coordinated disaster preparedness and response efforts among the states, ensuring a more effective and efficient response when these events occur.

4. **Economic Benefits**: The Mississippi River is a significant economic driver, supporting industries such as agriculture, transportation, and tourism. A well-structured compact could promote economic growth and job creation by ensuring the river’s continued viability and sustainability.

5. **Conflict Resolution**: Water-related conflicts can arise among states sharing a river. A compact provides a framework for resolving disputes through negotiation and collaboration rather than litigation, ultimately saving time and resources.

6. **Public Engagement**: A Mississippi River Compact could involve stakeholders, including environmental organizations, businesses, and communities along the river. Public

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¹ Motion passed unanimously by MRCTI board on 9/14/2023 during annual meetings in Bemidji, MN.
² The framework, like the Great Lakes Compact, sets the goals for MRCTI’s efforts to create a Mississippi River Compact along the 10-state corridor.
engagement would promote transparency, inclusivity, and a sense of shared responsibility for the river's well-being.

7. **Climate Change Adaptation:** As climate change impacts water resources, a compact can facilitate collective efforts to adapt and mitigate its effects. This includes addressing changing precipitation patterns, water quality concerns, and other climate-related challenges.

8. **Legal Framework:** A compact provides a legally binding agreement among states, offering a structured and enforceable mechanism for addressing water-related issues. This ensures that commitments are upheld over time.

9. **Preserving Natural Heritage:** The Mississippi River holds immense cultural and ecological significance. A compact would help preserve this natural heritage for future generations, emphasizing its value beyond just utilitarian purposes.

10. **Demonstrating Leadership:** Establishing a Mississippi River Compact would demonstrate leadership in responsible water resource management, setting an example for other regions facing similar challenges. It would showcase a commitment to sustainability and collaboration in addressing complex issues.