

I am Sean McBrearty, representing Oil and Water Don't Mix and Clean Water Action. I would like to spend my time today reiterating the points that have been made concerning this board's activities and purpose. Many Michigan residents, Tribal leaders, and experts who have examined the facts don't think that building an oil tunnel is in the best interests of our state. Your role in this is oversight, and unfortunately so far, that oversight has mainly consisted of listening to Enbridge and their contractors. They are telling you one side of the story and the other side is currently not being heard.

You heard the comments of Brian O'Mara today, a tunneling expert who has thoroughly reviewed Enbridge's oil tunnel plans and has raised serious concerns regarding the lack of geotechnical research and planning, and the very real risk of explosion during and after tunnel construction. These concerns have been voiced by other experts as well and are now part of the record before the Michigan Public Service Commission. MPSC has a role in deciding whether or not to approve of this project moving forward, but your role is oversight. You extended Dr. Mooney's contract today although as an expert he ought to be aware of these issues and has failed to raise them with you so far. Even PHMSA raised vague concerns about the operation and maintenance of a pipeline in the confined space of a tunnel. As an oversight authority, you will share the blame if this project moves forward and something goes wrong. Wouldn't you rather have it in the record that this board heard from all parties and all valid experts and considered these possible outcomes in advance? If you continue to listen only to those who would profit from this project moving forward you are doing yourselves and the public a disservice. Even if the risk is small, it's potential impact is huge and warrants your attention.

We've also raised concerns in letters to this board and in comments today about the conflict between Enbridge's 20 year depreciation timeline and their agreement to a 99 year lease with the State of Michigan. On one hand, they've told a federal regulator that their whole pipeline system will essentially be worthless by 2041, and on the other hand they've told you that they intend to operate an oil tunnel for the next century. Both of these things cannot be accurate. This as well warrants your attention because it is a huge conflict and could open up the state to having to pay for an expensive and dangerous stranded asset for years into the future. I'm sure Enbridge would never lie to a federal regulator in order to extract larger profits by raising tariffs for the next twenty years, but there is a substantial difference between what they've agreed to with you and what they've asked for from FERC. You ought to be looking into this as well before further taxpayer funds are wasted on this project.

The lack of geotechnical research, serious feasibility questions raised by tunneling experts, and the contradiction between a 20 year depreciation timeline and a 99 year lease gives credence to the theory that Enbridge never intends to build this tunnel. They are using this process as cover to keep an outdated and dangerous pipeline operating through the heart of the Great Lakes until they've extracted all the profit they can while our water remains at risk.