



RE: Proposed amendments to the Mackinac Bridge Authority to Allow Construction of a “utility tunnel” under the Straits of Mackinac (Senate Bill 1197, Casperson)

Governor Rick Snyder is asking the Legislature to change the authorizing language for the Mackinac Bridge Authority to open the way for building a “utility tunnel” under the Straits of Mackinac for Enbridge Energy, the world’s largest pipeline company. The Oil and Water Don’t Mix Coalition (OWDM), representing 12 federally recognized Native American tribes, 85 organizations, 289 businesses, and over 20,000 Michigan residents calls on the Legislature to block SB 1197 or any related legislation designed to change the Authority’s mission. Extensive background information is provided in attached documents, and OWDM experts are available for more in depth discussion about the severe flaws and dangers posed by this legislation. Below is a summary of the top issues of concern.

These proposed amendments:

- **Compromise the mission of the Mackinac Bridge Authority (MBA)**, one of Michigan’s premier independent agencies: For more than sixty years, the Mackinac Bridge Authority has overseen and managed Michigan’s most iconic symbol with no hint of controversy and with impeccable performance. This proposed legislation would draw the MBA into the middle of a major controversy with no other purpose than to protect a private Canadian oil company that seeks to continue to use a shortcut across Michigan and through the Great Lakes to transport oil from Canada to Canada, with much of that oil being shipped overseas. The proposed legislation would also undermine the MBA’s historic public support and lay the groundwork for Enbridge to threaten property owners using MBA authority under Senate Bill 1197 to condemn private property.
- **Expose the Mackinac Bridge Authority to financial peril:** Since its beginning, the Mackinac Bridge was designed to be funded through the tolls collected by those crossing the bridge. The proposed legislation, which is designed to authorize the backroom deal struck by Gov. Snyder and Enbridge, opens up numerous areas of financial risk for the MBA, including the potential liability in the event of a catastrophe associated with the proposed tunnel and the exposure if Enbridge fails to keep its commitments to build and maintain the tunnel for the 99 year lifespan.
- **Fail to address the imminent risk posed by the Line 5 pipelines** lying on the bottom of the Great Lakes for ten or more years: The deal struck by Gov. Snyder and Enbridge would lock in by right the presence of the 65-year old, gouged, damaged and deteriorating Line 5 dual pipelines across the Straits of Mackinac for at least the ten year period it is expected that tunnel construction would take. Under the Snyder Enbridge deal, a failure of the state to allow Enbridge to build the tunnel would allow the Line 5 pipelines to remain in place indefinitely. This is a “gun to the head” of the MBA and suggests the state would forfeit its right to decommission Line 5 across the Straits.

We strongly urge Michigan's legislators to VOTE NO on SB 1197 or any related legislation, and protect the Mackinac Bridge Authority from the dangers this legislation would pose to its autonomy.