

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT TO STOP THE TRANSPORTATION OF OIL UNDER THE GREAT LAKES

Whereas, Line 5 is a set of twin, 62-year-old pipelines owned by Enbridge that carry light crude oil and natural gas under the Straits of Mackinac; and

Whereas, the currents in the Straits of Mackinac at peak volumetric transport can be more than 10 times greater than the flow of Niagara Falls and switch bi-directionally from east to west every few days, and according to a 2014 University of Michigan study are the “worst possible place” for an oil spill in the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes contain 20 percent of the world’s fresh, available, surface water and are a drinking water source for over 25 million people; and

Whereas, one out of every five jobs in Michigan is linked to the high quality and quantity of fresh water in the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, tourism is one of Michigan’s largest income industries bringing in billions of travelers dollars spent each year; and

Whereas, agriculture, fisheries, shipping and industry depend on the health of the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, in 2009, the Great Lakes were linked to over 1.5 million jobs, with Michigan accounting for 35 percent of those jobs; and

Whereas, Enbridge has a shaky track record that includes 1,244 reportable spills, leaks and releases from 1996 to 2013; and

Whereas, Enbridge was in violation for their spacing requirements of its 1953 easement for Line 5 in 2014 and were responsible for a pinhole leak in a section of the pipeline north of the Straits in December 2014; and

Whereas, Enbridge was responsible for one of the worst and most expensive oil spills in U.S. history when Line 6b ruptured near Kalamazoo in 2010 allowing almost 1 million gallons of tar sands oil to leak for 17 hours before shutting down the line; and

Whereas, corrosion is the number one reason that pipelines fail; and

Whereas, Line 5 was built before the Great Lakes Submerged Lands Act was adopted so it didn’t have to obtain a permit and ensure that the pipeline wouldn’t pose a threat to the waters or the public’s use of the waters’ and

Whereas, Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette has stated (in regards to Line 5) that the “pipeline wouldn’t be built today” and that “the pipeline’s days are numbered;” and

Whereas, the Coast Guard Commandant testified before congress in 2015 that the Coast Guard would be unable to respond effectively to an open water oil spill in the heart of the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, there is no plan for how to recover oil if there was a leak during the winter when the lakes are covered with ice; and

Whereas, as Michiganders we have a responsibility to be wise stewards of the waters of our state for generations to come; and

Whereas, protection of Michigan’s water supplies and resources is better accomplished by prevention of contamination and environmental degradation, rather than attempting to clean up contamination and restore degraded environments after the fact.

Therefore, be it Resolved by this Board of Commissioners, that Grand Traverse County supports stopping the transportation of oil under the Great Lakes and supports shutting down Line 5 and the flow of oil under the Great Lakes; and

Be It Further Resolved, that Grand Traverse County supports H.R. 182 and C.R. 15 introduced by State Representative Sarah Roberts and Jeff Irwin calling on Governor Rick Snyder and Attorney General Bill Schuette to shut down Line 5; and

Be It Further Resolved, that Grand Traverse County will send letters to Governor Rick Snyder, Attorney General Bill Schuette, our State Representatives, and State Senators calling on them to take swift action to shut down Line 5.

APPROVED: February 24, 2016