

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SHUTTING DOWN ENBRIDGE LINE 5 PIPELINE UNDER THE STRAITS
OF MACKINAC

March 15, 2017

WHEREAS, Line 5 is a set of twin, 64-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 35 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 visitor 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 concerning track record that includes 1,244 reportable spills, leaks and releases from 1996 to 2013; and

WHEREAS, Enbridge was in violation of 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 oils 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's Attorney General 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;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on the 15th day of March 2017, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners supports stopping the transportation of oil under the Great Lakes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners supports shutting down Line 5 and the flow of oil under the Great Lakes, and

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners will send a copy of this resolution to Governor Rick Snyder, Attorney General Bill Schuette, and Washtenaw County's delegation to the Michigan Legislature, U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, calling on them to take swift action to shut down Line 5.

PASSED on this 15th day of March, 2017.