

Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes

Resolution No. 004-16

Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes Opposes Continued Operation of Enbridge Line 5 Across the Mackinac Straits

WHEREAS, the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) is an intertribal organization representing the thirty-three (33) federally recognized tribes and four (4) intertribal organizations in the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and Iowa, each having sovereign authority to govern their own affairs; and

WHEREAS, The Great Lakes represent over 20% of the surface fresh water in the world. Millions of people and other life forms depend on this water to survive. In our native traditions we are charged with sacred duties to respect and live in harmony with all of creation. Additionally, tribal and other economies of the region depend on industry, agriculture and tourism, all of which would be negatively affected by contaminated waters from a petroleum spill in the Great Lakes. The lakes ecosystem has a profound effect on regional and global weather. Protecting these waters is both a sacred duty and a practical necessity; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 64 years ago, a dual pipeline was placed under the Straits of Mackinac to carry petroleum products. Commonly known as Line 5, this pipeline is owned and operated by a company called Enbridge. The pipeline crosses the Straits that connect Lakes Michigan and Lake Huron. Although this aged pipeline has not had a spill, Enbridge pipelines of a similar age have ruptured and caused extensive environmental damages, specifically on the Kalamazoo River in southern Michigan (Line 6); and

WHEREAS, Studies have shown that a petroleum spill at the Straits would be catastrophic for the health and economies of the entire region. Because of strong currents in the Straits, these studies have shown that in a matter of hours both Lake Michigan and Northern Lake Huron would be affected. Cleaning up such a spill is also subject to unknowns such as a lack of knowing how to deal with spills in fresh water and how to deal with a spill under ice covered winter waters; and

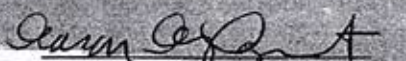
WHEREAS, Federal agencies such as EPA, the Army Corp of Engineers, and the US Coast Guard have testified that the current resources available are insufficient to deal with a spill from Line 5 in the Straits under good conditions, let alone in winter or bad weather conditions; and

WHEREAS, The Michigan Attorney General has said that if this pipeline were to be proposed today, it would not be able to get the necessary permits. A large diverse group of local governments and organizations have joined in a growing chorus of voices calling for Line 5 to be shut down due to the peril in which it puts the Great Lakes water resources.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes strongly opposes the continued operation of the pipeline system known as Enbridge Line 5, particularly the section that lies under the Straits of Mackinac.

CERTIFICATION

As Vice President of the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes, I do hereby Certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 004-16 was passed on April 27, 2016, at a duly called meeting at which a quorum was present with 19 voting for, 0 voting against, and 0 abstaining.


Aaron Payment, Vice President