

**Public Comment - Jt. Select Committee on the Flint Water Public Health Emergency, March 29th, 2016**

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I was glad to hear, at the beginning of today's hearing, that you are here to 'Listen to the People' but ...I don't necessarily believe it. For ten years I have been trying to get listened to in Lansing to get help for MI's foster children, brain damaged by prenatal alcohol exposure, which is much worse than 'lead' and could impact 22% of MI's children.

No one has listened ...yet.

After listening to Leanne Walters talk ...MI's Professional Engineers and Universities should be ashamed of themselves. I am ashamed of them. I wish I was as articulate as Leanne ...maybe you would listen to me.

I'm going to 'cut right to the chase' since you need to know 'what to do now!' ...and you'll probably cut-me-off before I finish.

1) In the future ..**Keep POLITICS out of WATER TREATMENT.**

2) **Pass legislation requiring Directors of Municipal Water and Waste Water Treatment Departments/Plants/Authorities be licensed Professional Engineers (P.E.'s) AND tenured, civil servants ...free from political interference.**

Anyone who was making water treatment decisions leading to the Flint Crisis, who was not a licensed Water Treatment Operator and/OR a Professional Engineer (P.E.) should be in jail or prison. Same for any P.E's who said Corrosion Control was 'not needed'. Any licensed operators, who allowed 'unlicensed and unqualified' personnel to operate and/or interfere with the safe operation and delivery of water, resulting in harm to the public, should lose their license and be sent to jail or prison.

3) **Do a proper, INDEPENDENT, transparent ENGINEERING analysis of the Karegnondi Water Authority(KWA) to determine the best REGIONAL solution for the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department (DWSD) and the Karegnondi Water Authority(KWA). It's not the 'holy trinity' ...but it could be.**

The KWA is the wrong solution to the 'high cost of water problem for Flint'. Genesee County Drain Commissioner Jeff 'Wright' ...is 'WRONG'. As stated by VA Tech Prof Marc Edwards in DC on March 15th ...the high cost of Flint's water was not DWSD charges, but the highest number of water main breaks in the country. KWA does NOT solve the problem of the high cost of Flint's water.

4) **Start ...I mean CONTINUE (started in 1979) ...replacing 'LEAKY', and compromised, WATERMAINS AND, at the same time (cheaper), any lead or galvanized iron pipe service lines encountered. It has to be done ...sooner or later ...do it now.**

It is estimated that 40% of water delivered through Flint's distribution system is lost due to 'leakage'. This is 'insane' ...and reflects a system badly in need of upgrades. In the early '80's, Flint was undergoing MAJOR infrastructure upgrades and replacements to their water and wastewater plants and distribution systems. This work essentially stopped ...when that 'fine corporate citizen' GM 'pulled the plug on Flint' ...because they were ONLY making \$2 Billion per year profit.

5) **STOP attaching unpaid water bills to people's property tax bills. That's immoral.**

6) **Replace DHHS Director Nick Lyon with a Medical Doctor (M.D.).**

What are ya'll doing in Flint?

Does it make you feel good to listen to how the Governor and State Government has failed and harmed Flint's residents?

You should be back in Lansing passing legislation to make sure a water crisis like this never happens again and start writing checks to fix it.

Say good-bye to your **\$614 million Rainy Day Fund** ...it's raining ...and you made it rain ...buy some umbrellas.

As the Flint Task Force stated ...this is clearly a case of **Environmental Injustice**. That really says it all.

The poisoning of Flint, and the DWSD shutoff of water to thousands of poor Detroit residents, who could not afford to pay the increases in their water bills, necessitated by the OBSCENE \$5.2 BILLION debt, accumulated while under Federal Oversight for 37 years ...while the state governors, legislators, and the MDEQ did ...NOTHING ...are clearly reflective of a total disregard for the health and well being of MI's most vulnerable citizens, especially MI's children ...'our' children.

The '**Dumb and Dangerous**' decisions of Governor Snyder and his Flint Emergency Managers ...made possible by legislation some of you may have voted for (P.A. 436) ...are responsible for the Flint Lead Disaster.

It was **DUMB** ...to deny the citizens of Flint the clean **PURE MI Water** they enjoyed for 50 years and make them drink out of the **DRAINAGE DITCH** running outside this building.

**A clear case of Environmental Injustice.**

It was **DANGEROUS** ...for Governor Snyder, and his EM, Michael Brown, to hire Howard Croft, an electrician who installs solar panels, to head Flint's Water Treatment Plant ...**DANGEROUS**, possibly illegal, and if not ...it should be.

**The EPA has been telling Flint there is a problem with the REGIONAL Water Authority (DWSD) supplying Flint since Governor Snyder was 18 years old.**

How come the governors, and State and US legislators, failed to resolve this issue (federal oversight) for 37 years? And then, when he did ...Governor Snyder did it WRONG! What was his 'real' agenda?

### **The 'root cause'**

As I tried to tell you last week

(<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/committees/Default.aspx?commid=283>), before I got 'cut-off', was that the origin of the Flint Crisis can be traced back to 1974 with the changing of the Detroit City Charter, removing the requirement that the Director (previously, CHIEF ENGINEER) no longer had to be a tenured, civil servant AND a Professional Engineer (P.E.) free from political interference. Carl Levin presided as City Council President. It opened the door to mayoral appointees (read - 'lackeys'), incompetence, corruption, a massive debt and the equally flawed decision to start the KWA ...and for Flint to draw water out of a drainage ditch.

Had competent, Professional Engineers (P.E.'s) been in charge of both DWSD and Flint's Water Works, with qualified, licensed Water Plant Operators working under them ...the City of Flint would not have been poisoned.

It was clear, from Flint's licensed Water Plant Operator Mike Glasgow's testimony, that he ...lacked the confidence, competency, experience, and 'intestinal fortitude' to prevent the poisoning of Flint's citizens. Had he had the support of a P.E., he might have done a good job. It was not fair to put him in this position.

For a more detailed history, see DWSD-The First 300

Years: [http://archive.dwsd.org/downloads\\_n/about\\_dwsd/history/complete\\_history.pdf](http://archive.dwsd.org/downloads_n/about_dwsd/history/complete_history.pdf)

You will see that privatization, and the outsourcing of critical engineering and construction management duties, is a recipe for DISASTER.