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September 6, 2016

Senate Natural Resources Committee Members
Tom Casperson (R) Committee Chair, Phil Pavlov (R) Vice Chair, David Robertson (R), Jim Stamas (R),
Rebekah Warren (D) Minority Vice Chair and Senator Jim Stamas (R)
Farnum Building, Rm. 210
125W. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

RE: Wednesday, September 7, 2016 hearing on the appointment of Ms. Grether as director of the DEQ

Dear Committee members and Senator Stamas:

Please accept this letter in opposition to the approval of Ms. Heidi Grether as Director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Though Ms. Grether may be a fine individual, this is a question of perception and optics. Her background is almost exclusively in work for major oil companies including BP America and Amoco making her unquestionably an industry insider with close ties to major oil companies. She was a lobbyist and external manager for BP during the Deepwater Horizon accident. At Amoco she was director of governmental affairs.

Decisions regarding the future of Enbridge, Inc.'s Pipeline 5 under the Straits of Mackinac are among the most important ones facing the new DEQ director. She has already telegraphed her resistance to act decisively to protect the Great Lakes in a press conference August 12 saying: "...if you want all the information and facts you can possibly have, it is premature" to call for the Enbridge Inc. Line 5 pipeline to be shut down.

In my experience, it's impossible to have all the information and facts completely nailed down before making most decisions. The "what ifs" can spiral on indefinitely and in the case of Pipeline 5, they have been ongoing for years. An effective leader and manager knows this. That's why I believe politics and her oil industry bias is already showing. She is not the right person for the director's job at the DEQ in 2016.

A large number of reputable scientists and studies have already warned of the real potential of a rupture and the catastrophic damage it would cause to the Lakes Huron and Michigan. In a state still recovering from a recession, it would impact the multi-million dollar tourism and fishing industries and destroy miles of pristine shoreline polluting one of the largest fresh water sources on the planet.

As a resident and homeowner on Lake Huron, I have a very personal interest in protecting the beauty and pristine fresh waters that millions of our citizens enjoy. But even if I were not a home owner, I

would oppose her appointment. I have traveled to other countries and seen their beautiful beaches despoiled by oil residue. I have tried scraping tar balls off my feet after a walk in the sand. I never want the same thing to happen in Michigan.

A disparate group of organizations, some generally on opposite sides of issues, are united in their agreement of the threat of the Enbridge Pipelines and their determination that they be shutdown. Among the individuals concerned about the possibility of rupture of the twin 63-year old pipelines are former Governor William Milliken and Michigan's two U.S. Senators. Those two senators lobbied hard and effectively for new federal regulations to better protect the Great Lakes. Yet, our state and its leaders lag behind in making a critically important decision that would protect and benefit its citizens and businesses because it impacts one Canadian oil company.

Those two pipelines funnel 23 million gallons of oil underneath the pristine Straits of Mackinac between Lakes Michigan and Huron. The Great Lakes are among the most ecologically sensitive areas in the world and comprise 20 percent of the fresh surface water on the planet. The Straits are a dynamic and powerful body of water.

And this where the appointment of Ms. Grether becomes an issue of optics and perception. She and the DEQ are in a no-win situation. If she refuses to recommend the shutdown of the pipelines, she will be perceived as pandering to the oil industry. If there is a rupture on her watch, she may be forced to resign but the damage will be catastrophic. If she recommends a shutdown, she is disloyal to the energy industry and former positions she took in her previous jobs and possibly a future job back in that industry.

I realize on the political side, it may be difficult to reject the appointment of an individual some of you likely know and have worked with recently in her role as deputy director for the Michigan Agency for Energy. But I would hope Committee members and the full Senate instead weigh what is best for Michigan and how we has a state our perceived both internally and externally. Michigan has not recovered from the tragedy in Flint, and the children of that city may never recover.

I urge the Senate Natural Resources Committee to take a bipartisan stand for the good and welfare of the people of Michigan and the vital Great Lakes and say no to Ms. Grether's appointment as director of the DEQ.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Briggs-Bunting". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Jane Briggs-Bunting
Resident and homeowner in Alcona County