

Ohio House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Public Safety
Testimony: Ranking Member Michael Sheehy, House Resolution 13

Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, and Members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony on House Resolution 13, which would urge Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Director of Natural Resources Daniel Eichinger to make all efforts to keep the Enbridge Line 5 operating.

Line 5 is a major oil pipeline that carries petroleum from Western Canada to Eastern Canada via the Great Lakes States. Construction on the pipeline was completed in 1953. After construction was completed, the State of Michigan granted an easement to Lakehead Pipe Line Company and its successor, Enbridge, which allowed the construction, operation, and maintenance of Line 5 through the Straits of Mackinac.

On November 13, 2020, following a review of Enbridge's compliance with the easement, the State of Michigan ordered Line 5's closure within 180 days, citing persistent violations of the 1953 easement. The closure of this pipeline would have an adverse effect on Northwestern Ohio. Line 5 provides the crude oil that is refined at PBF Energy's Toledo Refining Company and the BP-Husky Toledo Refinery, both of which are located in my hometown of Oregon, Ohio. Combined, these companies employ 1,210 hardworking people, in addition to the contractors who employ hundreds more workers. The closure of the Line 5 pipeline would effectively shutter these refineries and leave hundreds unemployed.

We know that pipelines are not without inherent risk. Oil spills have the potential to devastate a region's economy, environmental health, and livelihood. The 2010 Kalamazoo River oil spill heightened concerns about other pipelines in the region. The environmentally sensitive Straits of Mackinac are, effectively, the bridge that connects Michigan to its Upper Peninsula. In 2018, a tugboat anchor caused minor damage to the pipeline, and in 2020 it was found that a screw anchor support had shifted from its original position. These instances are cause for concern. However, former Governor Rick Snyder made an agreement with Enbridge to replace the current pipelines with pipe enclosed in a tunnel four hundred feet beneath the Straits.

Many of you know where I stand when it comes to the Great Lakes. Lake Erie supports multiple billion-dollar industries, sustains tens of thousands of jobs, and provides drinking water for millions of Ohioans. The maritime economy of Lake Erie is responsible for more than \$2 billion of Ohio's GDP annually. I serve on the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus to advocate for legislation that protect these precious resources. And while I believe Ohio should pursue a diverse energy portfolio that includes green energies, we must rely on what we have now. The move to close Line 5 has been met with bipartisan opposition here in Ohio, including Governor Mike DeWine, Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, and Oregon Mayor Mike Seferian. Here in the House, this Resolution has co-sponsors on both sides of the aisle. It is my hope that a strong response from this body will help reverse Governor Whitmer's decision.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this important legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions you have.