



## **Senator Theresa Gavarone**

2<sup>nd</sup> Ohio Senate District

Sponsor Testimony for Senate Resolution 41

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

May 12, 2021

Chairman Peterson, Vice-Chairman Schuring and Ranking Member Williams, I appreciate the chance to address you and the other members of the Energy and Public Utilities Committee about my legislation, Senate Resolution 41, which I am proud to sponsor with Minority Leader Yuko. This legislation urges Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Director of Natural Resources Daniel Eichinger to make all to keep the Enbridge Line 5 operating.

As you may know, Line 5 is a major oil pipeline that carries petroleum from Western Canada to Eastern Canada via the Great Lakes States ever since its completion in 1953. From there, the State of Michigan granted an easement that has allowed for the operation of Line 5.

Unfortunately, last November, Governor Whitmer ordered Line 5 to close in 180 days. I believe today is the 180<sup>th</sup> day. The closure of Line 5 would devastate the lives of the 1,200+ employees who work at the PBF Energy Toledo Refining Company and the BP-Husky Toledo Refinery—both Lucas County employers. In addition to the 1,200 employees, closure of Line 5 would also affect the hundreds of contractors hired by each company.

In fact, the potential economic devastation was detailed by the Consumer Energy Alliance (CEA) in a recent report. I believe that report has been distributed to members of the committee in hard copy. The study stated that, “Ohio could lose up to \$13.7 billion in economic activity, \$147.9 million in state revenue and over 20,000 jobs from the shutdown of the Line 5 pipeline ordered by Michigan’s governor”.

That same report also says that likely repercussions of the Line 5 closure include, “higher costs for propane and other natural gas liquids, higher home heating bills and larger economic consequences that could result from the Canadian government’s response...” This would mean higher agricultural and energy prices that would immediately increase the cost of living for Ohio households.

Most of you know that I represent the longest stretch of Lake Erie shoreline of any member in the General Assembly, so it probably comes as no surprise how important Lake Erie is to my district. I am a member of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus and was recently appointed as the Senate member to the Great Lakes Commission, so I am very supportive of ensuring the health of Lake Erie, and the rest of the Great Lakes, both in the present in the future. But I agree with the science on this issue—the benefits of Line 5 far outweigh the risks.

To be clear, I do not believe Governor Whitmer's original order was meant to unnecessarily harm anyone. But the reality is that the closure of Line 5 would affect a countless number of American and Canadian citizens. So much so that she has received significant bipartisan pushback from just about every level of government both in the United States and Canada.

Line 5 is critical to our state, country and internationally. I support measures designed to mitigate the risk of a pipeline, like those taken by former Michigan Republican Governor Rick Snyder to replace the current pipeline with a pipe enclosed in a tunnel four hundred feet underneath the water. And I am open to other ideas to ensure the health of our Great Lakes. However, like my joint sponsor, I am strongly against Line 5 closing and will work tirelessly to make sure it doesn't.

I'd like to thank my joint sponsor, Minority Leader Yuko, for working with me on Senate Resolution 41 and I would like to thank the committee for their attention to this vital issue.

Chairman Peterson, we would be happy to answer any questions.