

RAPID RESPONSE: YOUR HELP NEEDED



At one of the many Oil & Water Don't Mix Rallies I have attended to speak on behalf of protecting waters and shut down Line 5.

Aaron A. Payment, MPA
Tribal Chairperson
Representing All Members Everywhere

Ahneen, Booze, Negee:

The following is an update on a few key items and a request for your support and action in solidarity on these items. We ask that our Senators and House representatives vote in favor of bills that support tribal sovereignty and funding that we rely upon as both a trust and treaty responsibility. Please see below how you can help.

GRAYMONT MINE

We continue to be deeply concerned about the State of Michigan's decision to sell state-owned public lands in our treaty ceded territory to Graymont, a Canadian limestone mining company. Graymont initially announced a plan to purchase more than 11,500 acres of state-owned public lands in the Rexton area of the Eastern UP. Our Tribe was an early and vocal opponent of this plan. We met with the Michigan DNR several times to oppose this unprecedented and massive sale of public lands. While our objections had an impact, the State ultimately approved a scaled back version of Graymont's plan whereby they are acquiring 2,000 acres

of surface lands. On the remainder of the property, about 7,000 acres, Graymont will be limited to acquiring

Enbridge Oil Pipe Line Burst at the Kalamazoo River from 2010. When



underground mineral rights and the state will continue to own and control the surface land. For now, the right of Tribal members to access the surface lands for hunting, fishing, and gathering is preserved on most of the affected lands.

We remain deeply disappointed in the outcome as it is still a massive sale of public land and mineral rights.

We feel it significantly diminishes the areas available to exercise our hunting, fishing and gathering rights. We will oppose similar proposals in the future. At this juncture, the Tribe remains vigilant in our opposition and will monitor similar special interest transactions. We are frustrated at the outcome and share

the desire to educate government officials of the need to protect our inherent and retained treaty rights. The work I and other Board Members do at the national level is always with this in mind.

ENBRIDGE LINE 5 IMMINENT THREAT

The pipeline at the Straits of Mackinac is an accident waiting to happen. I

have personally seen the devastation from the 2010 catastrophic pipeline failure in Michigan at the Kalamazoo River while I worked as the Executive Director for the local tribe there. The devastation of a spill at the Straits, to our tribal fishers and their livelihoods, cannot be overstated. Likely, our centuries old fishing way of life would cease. Senators Stabenow and Peters have introduced a bill in the US Senate dealing with pipeline safety, specifically banning oil shipments by tanker ship in the Great Lakes and assessing the current status of oil spill response and cleanup plans. In response to the Michigan Pipeline Safety Task Force recommendations, Governor Snyder recently created the Michigan Pipeline Safety Advisory Board, a great first step. The Governor, however, included Enbridge on that board but failed include any tribal representation.

Please call Governor Snyder's office (517) 373-3400 in Lansing or at his UP Office at (906) 228-2850 and ask for tribal representation on this important pipeline safety advisory board.

TRIBAL LABOR AND SOVEREIGNTY ACT (S248; HR511)

Please contact your Congressional Rep. and ask for their strong support of the *Tribal Labor and Sovereignty Act*. For purposes of labor law, the bill treats Tribal governments in the same manner as state and local govern-

ments. The bill requires that the National Labor Relations Act exempt Tribes from its list of "employers" (just as it does for state and local governments) and withholds Tribal businesses from the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board. In short, this bill protects the sovereignty status of tribes.

TRUST ASSET REFORM ACT (S383; HR812)

Please ask your Congressional Rep to support the *Trust Asset Reform Act*. In addition to their continued commitment of the 1997 *Michigan Land Claims Settlement*, national legislators support for this act will reinforce tribes' right to manage their own resources. This bill enables tribes to negotiate agreements with the Secretary of Interior for the management of their own trust resources, and eventually phase out the Department of Interior's Office of Special Trustee for American Indians.

TRIBAL EMPLOYMENT & JOB PROTECTION ACT (S. 1771; HR 3080)

This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to exclude from the definition of "applicable large employer" for purposes of the employer health care mandate under the *Affordable Care Act*: (1) any Indian tribal government or subdivision, (2) any tribal organization, or (3) any corporation or partnership if more than 50% of the equity interest of such an entity is owned by an Indian tribal government or tribal organization.

Please contact your legislator as noted above and please send me an email to confirm once you have done so. Your voice is important. Join us in protecting our future for the next Seven Generations and beyond.

Chi McGwitch, Negee!

Inaugural National Institutes of Health Tribal Advisory Committee meeting. I was proud to have been elected by fellow Tribal leaders as the Chairperson of this new committee. The costs of my travel, lodging and meals and that of a Technical Advisory are covered by NIH.



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