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February 3, 2016

Waukesha Diversion Comments  
c/o Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers  
20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 2700  
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Regional Body Designees and Compact Council Alternates and Secretariat,

The City of Waukesha's application to borrow water from Lake Michigan is now entering the next, and possibly final, stage. Waukesha, which is under court order to find a new drinking water supply, has been examining its options for more than a decade. The state of Wisconsin has been analyzing the issue for at least five years. Ultimately, Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources determined the city's application meets the criteria for approval as laid out by the Great Lakes Compact, an agreement between the states and Canadian provinces that border the Great Lakes.

The city's application is now before the Great Lakes Regional Compact Council, which will have the final say. I support approval of Waukesha's application because it clearly complies with the requirements laid out in the Compact and the city has proposed a reasonable and environmental responsible plan.

The regional review process was designed to be unbiased and based on science and key criteria contained in the Compact. The Compact was established so that every community directly impacted by the Great Lakes would have a voice. This was necessary to ensure that decisions about the Lakes would not be driven by politics. The process is rigorous and exhaustive. It's a lot harder to do it this way, but the result will be rooted in true democracy and based on science and planning, not public pressure.

Of course, the public should have its say and the regional review process provides for an opportunity for that to occur. Through public events and online forums, public input has been and will continue to be registered.

But the Compact is clear about what qualifies a community to receive Great Lakes water. Among the most important standards for approval are: that the community making the request be in a county that straddles the Great Lakes Basin divide and that the community has the ability to return the water it borrows. These standards wisely protect everyone in the Great Lakes Basin by ensuring that Great Lakes water is not sent to faraway locations outside the basin. Should an application be rejected for reasons not

discovered as part of the fact-finding process, the Compact and the communities it is meant to serve would suffer.

Waukesha meets these requirements. The city has instituted a comprehensive water conservation program to reduce existing and future needs for water but still needs a new water supply. The current water supply is depleted and contains natural contaminants such as the carcinogen radium. The request to borrow Great Lakes water comes after the city considered 13 other potential options and conducted an in-depth analysis of the five other prospective water supply alternatives to Lake Michigan. Three different entities (the City of Waukesha, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and regional planning officials) held more than 100 public meetings and independently found that none of the alternatives proved to be environmentally sound, cost-effective or sufficient compared to Great Lakes water.

Waukesha's plan makes sense and protects the Great Lakes at the same time. It would withdraw a minimal amount of water (equal to 1/1,000,000<sup>th</sup> of 1% of the Great Lakes volume) from Lake Michigan via an existing water supply pipeline and would return the same volume of water to a tributary river after it has undergone advanced treatment. There will be no net loss of Great Lakes water to the basin. The enhanced flow in the tributary will in fact improve a fish egg collection facility that is downstream from where the return water will be discharged, providing a benefit to the Great Lakes fishery.

Approval of Waukesha's application does not have to be a choice between a safe water supply for the city and protecting the Great Lake. Under the terms of the Compact, both are possible. The communities of the Great Lakes need the Compact to be successfully utilized so that important water issues are properly managed and the Great Lakes are protected today and into the future. Waukesha's application should be approved in order to show that the Compact - and the regional cooperation and trust that fostered it - is working.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.", is written over the word "Sincerely,". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" that loops around the start of the name.

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, Jr.  
Member of Congress