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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Lake Michigan is a valuable fresh water resource for the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Pollution in Lake Michigan is a long-running problem for the citizens of the State who use the Lake as a primary source of drinking water; and

WHEREAS, The beaches of Lake Michigan provide a significant source of tourism income for the State of Illinois and other states bordering the Lake; and

WHEREAS, The British Petroleum oil refinery in Whiting, Indiana is planning an expansion that would increase the refinery's discharges into the Lake significantly, including 54% more ammonia (for a total discharge of 1,584 pounds of ammonia per day) and 35% more sludge (for a total discharge of 4,925 pounds of sludge per day) on a daily basis, running contrary to years of efforts to clean up the Great Lakes; and

WHEREAS, Ammonia promotes algae blooms that can kill fish in the Lake and the sludge that will be discharged into the Lake by British Petroleum is full of concentrated heavy metals; and

1           WHEREAS, The increased discharge into the Lake runs counter  
2 to a provision of the federal Clean Water Act that prohibits  
3 any downgrade in water quality near a pollution source, such as  
4 the British Petroleum refinery; and

5           WHEREAS, Indiana State regulators are allowing British  
6 Petroleum to install equipment that mixes its toxic waste with  
7 clean lake water about 200 feet offshore, and actively diluting  
8 pollution in this way is banned in Lake Michigan under Indiana  
9 law; and

10           WHEREAS, The Indiana Department of Environmental  
11 Management granted British Petroleum the first-ever exemption  
12 to allow the pollution "mixing zone" in Lake Michigan; and

13           WHEREAS, Environmental regulators remain unsure about the  
14 ecological effects of the relatively new refining process that  
15 British Petroleum plans to use and the increased discharge into  
16 Lake Michigan; and

17           WHEREAS, State and federal environmental regulators have  
18 agreed that there is not enough room at the British Petroleum  
19 site to upgrade the refinery's water treatment plant; and

20           WHEREAS, The United States Environmental Protection Agency  
21 has not objected to the State of Indiana's decision to allow

1 the increased discharge by British Petroleum; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
3 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
4 strongly urge the United States Environmental Protection  
5 Agency to follow a strict interpretation of the federal Clean  
6 Water Act to minimize any additional pollution into Lake  
7 Michigan; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we urge the United States Environmental  
9 Protection Agency to prohibit the Whiting, Indiana British  
10 Petroleum refinery from increasing the refinery's current  
11 discharges of ammonia and sludge into Lake Michigan until the  
12 ecological and environmental impact of the increased  
13 discharges is fully understood by federal and state  
14 environmental regulators; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That we urge the United States Environmental  
16 Protection Agency to require more investigation into the  
17 possibility of expanding the British Petroleum refinery's  
18 water treatment plant before allowing the refinery to proceed  
19 with current plans for increased pollution discharge into Lake  
20 Michigan; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois delegation to the  
22 United States Congress to take legislative action against any

1 planned increase in the discharge of pollution into Lake  
2 Michigan that is contrary to the federal Clean Water Act and  
3 threatens the health of the environment of this State; and be  
4 it further

5       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
6 delivered to each member of the Illinois delegation to the  
7 United States Congress, to the administrator of the United  
8 States Environmental Protection Agency, Stephen L. Johnson,  
9 and to the Great Lakes National Program Manager for the United  
10 States Environmental Protection Agency, Mary A. Gade.