



NEWS RELEASE

WAYNE COUNTY COMMISSION

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Commission calls for end to nuclear waste dumping in Wayne County

In a sweeping resolution, Wayne County Commissioners today called for an end to nuclear waste dumping in the county as well as new regulations mandating that federal and state agencies notify locals of plans to transport hazardous waste to their communities.

“For too long, Wayne County has been unfairly burdened with hazardous waste which poses a serious danger not only to our residents but to the entire Great Lakes region,” Wayne County Commission Chair Alisha Bell (D-Detroit) said.

“What we seek is a common-sense solution that protects residents and the nation’s largest fresh water supply.”

County and local officials were outraged last month when it was announced that nuclear waste from the Manhattan Project of the 1940s would be shipped to a landfill in Van Buren Township.

The resolution calls for a halt to that effort as well as Congressional action to force the Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), “to cease authorizing the transportation and disposal of hazardous waste in populated urban areas in Wayne County.”

It also calls on Congress and the Michigan Legislature to create regulations requiring state and federal agencies to “immediately notify local government officials of

the potential transport to and disposal of hazardous waste, and to increase transparency in their processes and communications with local governments and residents.”

“This isn’t the first time we have been caught off guard by news that hazardous waste would be coming to our county,” Chair Bell said, referring to hazardous waste from last year’s train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio.

“That must stop. Wayne County is too heavily populated and too close to the Great Lakes for us to continue being a hazardous waste dumping ground.”

The resolution supports two bills pending in the state Legislature, H.B. 5332 and S.B. 938 that would increase tipping fees transporters pay to store materials in landfills. It also calls on legislators to revise those bills to ban transfer of previously stored waste like that coming to the Van Buren Township site.

The resolution also calls for Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and EGLE limit hazardous waste coming into the state and require stricter enforcement of penalties for violators and for the state to immediately increase tipping fees hazardous waste haulers pay to landfill operators.

The resolution grew out of an Aug. 28 public meeting commissioners held with elected officials and residents. Those speaking at the meeting included U.S. Reps. Debbie Dingell and Rashida Tlaib.

Officials also held a town hall meeting on the subject Sept. 4 in Belleville.