

Ecological Wisdom • Social Justice • Grassroots Democracy • Non-Violence

Green Party of Michigan



<http://www.MIGreenParty.org/>

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Michigan Greens Oppose HB 4540's New FOIA Loophole for Pipelines

The Green Party of Michigan (GPMI) announces its opposition to Michigan House Bill 4540, which would open a loophole in the state's Freedom of Information Act to keep public records on oil and gas pipelines and plans secret from the public.

The bill was introduced May 5 by Kurt Heise (R-020, Plymouth) and assigned to the state House's Committee on Oversight and Ethics. Committee chair Ed McBroom (R-108, Vulcan), who signed on as a co-sponsor, has already scheduled the bill for two hearings – the next one Thursday morning.

"Government of the people, by the people and for the people would clearly be violated by the secrecy promoted by House Bill 4540," says Green Party member, lawyer Sherry A. Wells of Ferndale. "Grassroots Democracy is one of the key values of the Green Party worldwide, as are Ecology, Social Justice and Nonviolence. This Bill violates them all."

"The landslide defeat of Proposal 1 by a greater number of voters than usually come out to non-presidential elections is a clear signal of unhappiness with the legislators," notes Candace Caveny of Lapeer, GPMI's 2014 candidate for lieutenant governor. "Woe to those who are ignoring this."

Caveny adds that shots were nearly fired in Lapeer County over the would-be ET Ranger pipeline when the public was not well notified. "Any attempt to block public notice of pipeline plans could well be endangering the safety of multiple lives when pipeline surveyors appear. Legislators sponsoring this legislation might end up with blood on their hands, and should think long and hard before proceeding"

John Anthony La Pietra of Marshall was disappointed to find his hometown's current House member David Maturen as a co-sponsor of HB 4540. He wrote Maturen, "[T]he district you were elected to serve is where Enbridge had its massive spill in 2010. If you want to maintain your claim to be a representative of the 63rd District, you need to oppose this giveaway to Enbridge and its partners in pollution."

Chris Wahmhoff of Kalamazoo, GPMI's co-meeting manager, agrees. "This takes more local control away from local communities and puts it in the hands of a state that does not have our interests in mind. I think it's important right now to be in the streets like people are today, to be calling our legislators as people are today, and signing petitions and sharing on social media as people are doing today."

The text of HB 4540 and other official information can be found at the bill's page on the Michigan Legislature Website:

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2015-HB-4540>

The House committee's homepage is <http://house.michigan.gov/MHRPublic/CommitteeInfo.aspx?comkey=345>

GPMI's next statewide membership meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 6 in Grand Rapids. For more information about GPMI, its platform, and its values, visit <http://www.MIGreenParty.org/>

You can also "like" the [Green Party of Michigan US](#) Facebook page, and follow GPMI's Twitter feed [@MIGreenParty](#).

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GPMI was formed in 1987, and has been on the Michigan ballot since 2000. Greens are organized in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Each state Green Party sets its own goals and creates its own structure, but US Greens agree on Ten Key Values:

Ecological Wisdom

Community Economics
Decentralization

Grassroots Democracy

Feminism
Respect for Diversity

Social Justice

Personal/Global Responsibility
Future Focus/Sustainability

Non-Violence