



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MICHIGAN

EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

March 21, 2017

Members of the House Natural Resources Committee
House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representatives,

The League of Women Voters of Michigan opposes SB 129, as passed by the Senate. While it can be agreed that there is less risk of sulfide-bearing rock while mining for copper, without an Environmental Impact Assessment there is little assurance that disturbed rock in the surrounding area will not release dangerous sulfuric acid.

SB 129 does not guarantee or protect the right of public hearing or a comment period. It also prohibits the local government from regulating any aspect of mining activities such as hours of operation or roads traveled. Finally, this bill would impede the Department from making a thorough assessment by limiting the review process.

Our organization forms positions which are studied by our members and derived through consensus. These positions in most cases have been held for many years and depend on the role of public participation throughout the decision-making process. "The League believes that public understanding and cooperation are essential to the responsible and responsive management of our nation's natural resources. The public has a right to participate in decision-making at each phase in the process. Adequate funding is needed to ensure opportunities for effective public participation in all aspects of the decision-making process. Hearings should be held in easily accessible locations. Opportunities for public comment should actively encourage citizen participation in decision-making. All levels of government should share responsibilities of the management of our natural resources. The federal government should have the major role in setting standards for environmental protection and pollution control. Other levels of government should have the right to set more stringent standards."

Senate Bill 129 suppresses these processes and does not make the case to abandon a sound public process. The League of Women Voters of Michigan asks that you retain the rights to a public hearing, comments and regulation by local government for copper mining activities.

Sincerely,

Judy Karandjeff, President
League of Women Voters of Michigan