



## MICHIGAN

To: Honorable Members of the House Natural Resources Committee  
From: Amanda Fisher, Assistant State Director  
Date: May 9, 2019  
RE: House Bill 5638 – Changes to DEQ Water Withdrawal Regulations

We are writing to ask your support for House Bill 5638, which would make updates to the requirements followed by property owners when requesting a large water withdrawal from the DEQ, that could affect the streamflow depletion from the Great Lakes.

HB 5638 is common sense legislation that balances the desire and need to protect Michigan's jewel, the Great Lakes, with a fair regulatory environment for private property owners that include many small businesses.

Since the water withdrawal assessment requirements for property owners were put in place in 2008, there have been many scientific advances in the areas of analyzing and estimating the impact that large water withdrawals would have on the Great Lakes Basin. This bill simply allows the utilization of those advancements to determine whether a site-specific review is needed.

**Current statute already requires the DEQ to respond to a request for a site-specific review in 10 business days, this bill does not change that in any way.** However, according to a 2017 DEQ report, the average response time to property owners requesting a review as dictated by the use of the online assessment tool, is 35 days. The 25 day time difference could mean a great deal to a business looking to expand, especially those in agriculture who are governed by the weather. By using newer technology as well as the experience gained since implementation 10 years ago, this bill will help the department to be more streamlined in serving the citizens of Michigan, especially farmers and other small businesses.

Again, we ask for your yes vote on HB 5638 as it moves through the committee process. Thank you for your support of small businesses in Michigan!