

STATE SENATOR • JIM BARCIA • 31ST DISTRICT

Barcia Press Release

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Mayes and Barcia Hail DEQ's Decision to Move Forward on Karn-Weadock Plant

\$2.3 billion plant will spur economic investment in the area, create jobs

LANSING – State Representative Jeff Mayes (D-Bay City) and State Senator Jim Barcia (D-Bay City) today praised the decision of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to move forward on the air permit process for the proposed coal-fired facility at the Karn-Weadock complex in Hampton Township.

"I'm very excited that the Karn-Weadock expansion is back on track," said Mayes, Chair of the House Energy and Technology Committee. "Senator Barcia and I have worked hard to restart this process because businesses are looking for certainty when it comes to making major investments. Now that the DEQ is ready to move forward, we're one step closer to creating thousands of jobs for our community."

The DEQ announced a series of meetings and hearings that will constitute the next phase in the permit process. This includes a public comment portion, which will begin March 3 and last for 60 days. Public hearings will take place April 14 and 15.

"I am pleased that the process for moving forward with the new clean coal facility in Bay County is back on track," Barcia said. "We can't afford to delay one minute in putting people back to work and ensuring affordable, reliable energy for Michigan consumers and businesses. The DEQ already has strict guidelines in place for approving air quality permits and I know Consumers Energy is committed to meeting those high standards. A \$2.4 billion investment producing 1,800 jobs and \$11 million in additional property tax revenue will be a huge boost for Bay County and the entire region, and I am looking forward to continuing to help move this critical project forward as quickly as possible."

The permit process had recently been put on hold by order of Governor **Jennifer M. Granholm**, who directed the DEQ to deny air emissions permits for coal-fired plants if "feasible and prudent alternatives" exist that "better protect the air, water, and other natural resources of this state from pollution." As mentioned in her State of the State address, Granholm's directive also would have required the DEQ to evaluate whether a "reasonable electricity generation need exists" before approving construction of a new plant.

This directive was recently overturned via the opinion of the Attorney General, who stated that the Governor exceeded her authority by essentially drafting new regulations without the approval of the Legislature.

"This investment in our infrastructure is critical for creating the jobs that Bay County residents need now," Mayes said. "I remain committed to a diverse energy policy that includes both new base load generation and advancements in renewable technologies."

We can't afford to turn our back on new base load plants while so many of our workers will benefit from the jobs that these plants create."

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