

STATE SENATOR • LIZ BRATER • 18TH DISTRICT

Brater Press Release

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Brater Introduces Legislation to Increase Protections for Michigan Water

Bills will close bottling loop holes, reduce water diversions

LANSING—Senator Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) joined Senate Democratic Leader Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) and other members of their caucus today in offering legislation that will help protect Michigan’s water. The package of bills ensures large scale water withdrawals won't hurt our water resources, eliminates loop holes for water bottlers, and strengthens the tools of Michigan citizens to safeguard this precious resource.

“These bills build upon and increase the protections passed in last year’s Water Legacy Act,” said Brater. “We also must ensure that we don’t lose any of the progress we have already made.”

Brater’s bill ensures that all Department of Environmental Quality regulations will strongly protect our water resources and the people and aquatic life that rely on them. It also ensures that citizens who believe their water rights have been impaired or threatened have the right to seek legal recourse.

Other key elements of the package include:

- Schauer’s bill to ensure withdrawals will not harm citizens' rights or access to water or the water resources themselves.
- Schauer’s bill that reaffirms our waters belong to the citizens of Michigan and are held in the public trust.
- Sen. Glenn S. Anderson’s (D-Westland) bill that eliminates the loop hole that allows water bottlers to ship unrestricted quantities of water out of the state. Currently, Michigan law permits the withdrawal and shipping of water out of the state as long as it is shipped in individual containers smaller than 5.7 gallons.
- Sen. Deb Cherry’s (D-Burton) bill that requires the use of an interactive, web-based tool, which can predict if a withdrawal of a given size at any place in Michigan will adversely impact the fish communities in nearby water bodies.

“Michigan’s lakes, streams, and groundwater are a part of who we are and should be protected for future generations,” said Schauer. “These are common sense proposals that help put our citizens on equal footing with businesses and governments who are interested in our water.”

This legislation is supported by Clean Water Action, the Michigan Environmental Council, the Sierra Club, and Tip 'o the Mitt Watershed Council.

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State Senator Brater represents Senate District 18 which includes the cities of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Chelsea, the Villages of Barton Hills and Dexter, and the following townships: Ann Arbor, Augusta, Dexter, Freedom, Lima, Lyndon, Northfield, Salem, Scio, Sharon, Superior, Sylvan, Webster and Ypsilanti. She serves on the Appropriations Committee and is Democratic Vice Chair of the subcommittees on Natural Resources, Environmental Quality, and Judiciary and Corrections and is a member of the Higher Education Subcommittee.