

STATE SENATOR • LIZ BRATER • 18TH DISTRICT

# Brater Press Release

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## **Brater Calls for Action on DEQ and DNR Funding to Protect Land, Water Supply**

LANSING- Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) Michigan's clean water supply and land will face contamination if there are further reductions in funding to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), according to a report issued today by the Michigan League for Conservation Voters (MLCV). State Sen. Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor), the ranking Democrat on the Senate Appropriations DEQ and DNR subcommittees, said that the report is accurate in its assessment of the severity of the health and safety concerns associated with the state budget.

"This report shows the real and immediate health and safety effects of the lack of a budget solution," said Brater. "There will be severe consequences to human health if we don't find new revenue to prevent such long-term environmental damage."

The MLCV report, *Losing A Legacy*, outlined the various DEQ enforcement and clean-up programs that will go unfunded if the state does not reach a budget solution that includes new resources for both the DEQ and DNR. The DEQ would likely lose all funding for its contaminated site clean-up program and prevent future work on the thousands of toxic sites that still require treatment.

"If the DEQ does not have funding for enforcement, those who contaminate the water supply will not be required to clean up after themselves," explained Brater. "Our health and economy depend on clean land and water."

Tourism is Michigan's second largest industry. The report explains that combined, the DEQ and DNR have experienced a 62 percent decrease in funding since 2001. This has led to a decrease of over 15 percent in the workforce charged with protecting our water supply and land and the closure of 20 of the Michigan's state forest campgrounds. If this pattern continues, enforcement and prevention programs as well as a tourism industry based on outdoor activity will suffer considerably.

A copy of the report is available at: <http://www.michiganlcvedfund.org/LosingaLegacy.pdf>

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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.*