



## Update on the Line 5 Pipelines

From Board Member Mary Lee Orr

On February 24, 2016, the Benzie League of Women Voters unit had a program on the twin 63 year-old Enbridge Line 5 Pipelines, which carry oil from Canada under the Straits of Mackinac—645 miles to Detroit and Toledo.

A [University of Michigan study](#) warned that the Straits would be the worst place for an oil spill—endangering the popular tourist destinations, waters, and shorelines of Lakes Huron and Lake Michigan. Liz Kirkwood, Executive Administrator of [FLOW](#), gave an informative talk to a large audience.

The following is a list of facts from her discussion and handout, titled “Reasons to Shut Down Enbridge’s Line 5 Pipelines in the Straits.”



**League of Women Voters  
of the Grand Traverse Area**

**Serving Antrim, Benzie,  
Grand Traverse, and  
Kalkaska counties**

[Voter Newsletter](#)

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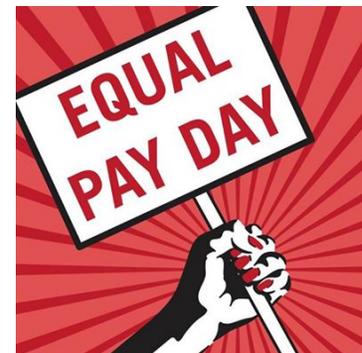
**Treasurer**

- Many of the pipes have lost their supports and are resting directly on the lake floor. Current speeds can reach 1 meter per second when transporting. Currents are x10 greater in the Straits than in volumes of up to 80,000 cubic meters of water per second—more than x10 greater than the flow over Niagara Falls.
- The Coast Guard is uncomfortable with Enbridge’s Emergency Response Plan; nor is there any possible way to recover spilled oil when lakes are ice-covered.
- Enbridge has determined that a portion of the pipe wall has lost 41% of its original thickness. In 2013, Enbridge upgraded pumps along Line 5 and increased the product flow under the Straits by 10%, from 490,000 to 540,000 barrels a day. Enbridge increased Line 5’s pipeline pressure by 20 percent, depending on the viscosity of the product being pumped and transported.
- In 2014 Michigan’s Pipeline Task Force conducted a thorough investigation which concluded that certain pipeline walls were no longer capable of safely carrying thick tar sands.
- Enbridge has a troubling track record in Michigan, causing the Kalamazoo 2010 oil spill--the largest in the nation—when line 68 burst, dumping nearly a million gallons of heavy tar sands oil for 17 hours before the detection of the spill and the shutting down of the line.
- Since 1988 Enbridge has had 15 known failures on Line 5.

FLOW’s recent [120 page report](#) demonstrates that Line 5 is not vital to Michigan’s energy

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## Equal Pay Day:

**April 12, 2016**

The Michigan Equal Pay Day Coalition, of which the League of Women Voters is a member, invites the public to recognize Equal Pay Day on April 12, 2016.

Though the federal law banning sex-based wage discrimination was enacted 52 years ago, there is still a significant pay gap between women's and men's wages. Equal Pay Day symbolizes how far into 2016 women must work to earn what men earned in 2015.

**Red** is work on the day to

infrastructure. The Great Lakes are a public trust, with the State acting as the trustee on behalf of citizens. If the state doesn't fulfill this stewardship role, then we must demand accountability.

Prevention—before catastrophe—is a preferred course, one that avoids expensive clean-up and restoration, with reference to the health and well-being of all lives that depend on clean water.

Ms. Kirkwood's handout ended with this observation: "Let's hold Atty General Schuette to his word: 'We would not allow this pipeline to be placed in the Great Lakes today, and its days are certainly numbered.'" (February 1, 2016.)

FLOW has sent a letter to the Governor and the Atty General, asking that the easement permit be cancelled. In addition, FLOW is gathering evidence for a citizens' lawsuit. (FLOW would not be a litigator.) The Benzie unit is following up with a letter-writing campaign to convince our Board of Commissioners to pass a resolution asking that the Line 5 be shut down. We are also pursuing the opportunity to request that LWVMI sanction our request to write the Governor and Atty General with a request that Line 5 be shut down.

symbolize that women's wages are "in the red." The public is invited to participate in Michigan's Equal Pay Day events in Lansing. An Issues Briefing will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church beginning at 9:00am, and an Equal Pay Day Rally on the capitol steps will begin at 12:30pm.

Please [click here for more details](#) and to register for the Issues Briefing.

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2015-2017 Selected Positions of the LMVUS For Action. [\(Downloadable brochure.\)](#)



# Save the Date: Spring Workshops from the League of Women Voters of Michigan

Saturday, April 16, 2016, 10am-2pm  
VOTE411 Training for local League VOTE411  
coordinators

Saturday, April 30, 2016, 9:30am-2:30pm  
Defending Democracy by Making Democracy Work  
Saint Paul Episcopal Church, 218 West. Ottawa St.  
Lansing, MI 48933

If anyone is interested in carpooling to the  
"Defending Democracy" workshop, contact  
President Jan Warren: warrenjan2000@yahoo.com

[Additional registration information may be found here.](#)

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