

**News From:**  
**Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie**



For Immediate Release June 30, 2016

**TOLEDO ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP CONDEMNS MAYOR'S LAKE RESOLUTION**  
**NEWS CONFERENCE 1:00 PM ON LAKE ERIE, END OF 113<sup>TH</sup> ST. IN POINT PLACE**

Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie (ACLE) today blasted a Lake Erie resolution proposed by Toledo Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson as “an empty gesture designed to make people think city leaders are doing something to protect our drinking water when they’re not.”

Susan Matz, an ACLE coordinator, condemned the resolution as a “worse than meaningless because it repeats falsehoods with the hope people will start to believe them,” specifically:

- 1. It claims the Clean Water Act does not regulate pollution from agricultural sources and therefore an EPA “impaired” designation would do nothing to reduce nutrient pollution, like Phosphorus, which comes mainly from manure and fertilizer.**

Ms. Matz explained that, “Provisions of the Clean Water Act specifically include CAFOs (Combined Animal Feeding Operations). Also, a lawsuit filed by the American Farm Bureau and other corporate agriculture supporters challenging the EPA was rejected by the Federal Courts on this very point.”

- 2. It falsely repeats that because the Clean Water Act doesn’t cover agriculture, reducing the 85% of Phosphorus coming from CAFOs and farm fields won’t be part of the solution.**

To this, Matz replied, “We don’t know how much of that 85% is coming from CAFOs, until after a pollution inventory is done to determine sources and amounts – in other words, who is putting how much and what into the ditches and streams that feed into the Maumee – and then setting TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Loads) for each of those sources. That requires federal coordination because Ohio, Michigan and Indiana are all in the Western Lake Erie watershed. That’s why we need the EPA’s impaired designation.”

- 3. It claims that a U.S. EPA “impaired” designation would cost the City heavily in upgrades to the sewage treatment plant.**

Mike Ferner, former Toledo City Council member took particular aim at what he called “a completely groundless claim,” saying, “This one doesn’t even pass the ‘sniff test.’ It’s a scare tactic parroted by the City’s Law Department that’s right out of the Ohio Farm Bureau play book,

specifically from Karl Gebhardt, a former 19-year lobbyist for the OFB who unfortunately is now deputy director of the Ohio EPA in charge of Lake Erie policy. Toledo water and sewer customers have put a half-billion dollars into massive and effective improvements at the Bay View sewage plant, plus we're putting a similar amount into reducing storm water discharges that will provide further environmental benefits.

ACLE urged Councilmembers Peter Ujvagi and Lindsay Webb, who both support an EPA impaired designation, and other members of council, to vote against the resolution and demonstrate that Toledo needs to support real solutions, not empty gestures.

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