

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 71

Rep. Borton offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to urge the Department of Natural Resources to
2 deny the Michigan National Guard's request to expand the Camp
3 Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center.

4 Whereas, The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is
5 currently considering a proposal to greatly expand the Camp
6 Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center despite resounding and
7 repeated opposition from Michiganders across the state. Camp
8 Grayling comprises a 148,000-acre area in the northern Lower
9 Peninsula, already making it the largest National Guard training
10 area in the United States. Last year, the Michigan National Guard
11 requested a 162,000-acre expansion of the facility, which would
12 more than double its current size. Following this request, the DNR
13 sought public comment on the proposal which was met with numerous

1 negative responses from concerned citizens, environmental groups,
2 and local governments statewide. The DNR is a state agency that
3 exists to serve the people of Michigan and should take seriously
4 the concerns that have been expressed by these parties - concerns
5 that we reiterate here; and

6 Whereas, The proposed expansion of Camp Grayling is completely
7 contradictory to the purpose underlying our Department of Natural
8 Resources. MCL 324.503(1) provides that the DNR is to "protect and
9 conserve the natural resources of this state[,] provide and develop
10 facilities for outdoor recreation[,] prevent the destruction of
11 timber and other forest growth by fire or otherwise[,] promote the
12 reforestation of forestlands belonging to this state[,] prevent and
13 guard against the pollution of lakes and streams within this state
14 and enforce all laws provided for that purpose with all authority
15 granted by law." Further, in its own mission statement, the DNR has
16 expressed its commitment "to the conservation, protection,
17 management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural
18 resources for current and future generations." Expanding Camp
19 Grayling against the wishes of so many concerned Michiganders
20 across our state and without regard for the serious implications
21 that the proposal has introduced would defy the ideals the DNR
22 stands for; and

23 Whereas, This expansion risks creating new and exacerbating
24 existing detrimental effects on Michigan's treasured natural
25 resources, risks that the DNR should recognize as unacceptable. The
26 areas comprising the proposed expansion would include vital forests
27 comprising one of the precious few habitats for the Kirtland's
28 Warbler as well as portions of Dead Stream Swamp, a National
29 Natural Landmark and one of the largest white cedar swamps in the

1 United States. Introducing new uses, including proposed
2 electromagnetic warfare training, to these areas does nothing but
3 raise new potential risks to the flora and fauna that exist
4 therein. And, as the proposal is being considered, there are
5 efforts underway to contain and clean per- and polyfluoroalkyl
6 substances - commonly known as PFAS - already present across the
7 current Camp Grayling area, prompting the Department of
8 Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's Grayling Post to oppose the
9 expansion. The DNR should pay heed to the reasonable and widespread
10 concerns that expanding military activities into these new areas
11 raise; and

12 Whereas, The people of Michigan have the right to demand
13 accountability from state agencies like the DNR and direct such
14 agencies to act in accordance with their wishes and well-being.
15 Michiganders across the state - but especially those in the
16 northern Lower Peninsula - value the recreational and sporting
17 activities that are possible in our pristine rivers, lakes,
18 wetlands, grasslands, and forestlands. We must remain steadfast in
19 protecting all our natural resources to maintain our reputation as
20 the most beautiful state for hunting and fishing enthusiasts,
21 outdoorsmen, and visiting tourists in the nation. And, alongside
22 fellow states in the Great Lakes region and Canada, Michigan has a
23 duty to protect our invaluable freshwater supply - a supply that
24 accounts for 20% of the entire world's fresh surface water - and be
25 guarded against any proposed activities that would threaten such a
26 vital natural resource. These are resources that are recognized,
27 revered, and treasured by Michiganders. We must be steadfast in
28 demanding that all state agencies - especially the DNR - work on
29 behalf of these interests and acts to represent the will of the

1 people voiced today in this Chamber; now, therefore, be it

2 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we That we urge
3 the Department of Natural Resources to deny the Michigan National
4 Guard's request to expand the Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training
5 Center; and be it further

6 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
7 That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of
8 the State of Michigan; the Director of the Department of Natural
9 Resources; the Director of the Department of Environment, Great
10 Lakes, and Energy; and leadership of the Michigan National Guard.