City of Chicago

R2013-884

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	10/16/2013
Sponsor(s):	Moreno (1) Pope (10) Cardenas (12) Cochran (20) Munoz (22) Tunney (44)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Call for President Barak Obama to strengthen and restore certain provisions of Clean Water Act
Committee(s) Assignment:	

RESOLUTION CALLING UPON PRESIDENT OBAMA TO STRENGTHEN AND RESTORE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT

WHEREAS, The North American Great Lakes are the world's largest freshwater system with more than 20% of the world's freshwater supply residing in them. Including Lake Erie, Michigan, Huron, Superior, and Ontario, the five lakes are an important source of fresh water and are home to many species of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, With the mistaken belief that water can dilute any substance, the lakes have also become a destination of dumping grounds for many different types of pollutants. Ranging from point source pollution such as industrial waste from drainage pipes to non-point source pollution like pesticide and fertilizer runoff from farms, these pollutants and others have had adverse effects on the lakes. Such adverse effects include reducing the water quality, contaminating soil, and damaging the lake ecosystems. This damage produces harmful repercussions on the fish and wildlife stocks, and to the humans surrounding the Great Lakes region as well.

WHEREAS, In his 2008 presidential campaign, candidate Barack Obama promised to strengthen provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act that had been weakened by judicial rulings and changed in previous administrations; and

WHEREAS, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its State of Illinois equivalent should strengthen enforcement of the Clean Water Act through the gradual reduction of permitted pollution levels from industrial facilities, ensuring permits are renewed in a timely manner, and mandating sizable minimum penalties for polluters in violation of the law; and

WHEREAS, The EPA should also eliminate the loopholes allowing greater discharge of toxic chemicals into waterways and require chemical manufacturers to test all chemicals for their safety, submitting the results of that testing to the government and the public. Furthermore, the agency should regulate chemicals based on their intrinsic capacity to cause harm to the environment or health, rather than basing regulation on resource-intensive and flawed efforts to determine "safe" levels of exposure to those chemicals; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, the EPA should require industries to disclose the amount of toxic chemicals they use in their facilities thereby safeguarding local residents' right to know about potential public health threats in their community. Federal and state agencies should create incentives for industry to reduce its use of toxic chemicals, require safer alternatives where alternatives exist, and phase out the worst ones; and

WHEREAS, This legislative body calls upon President Obama to keep his 2008 campaign promise to clarify that the Clean Water Act applies to headwater streams, intermittent waterways, isolated wetlands and other waterways for which Clean Water Act protection has been threatened due to recent Supreme Court decisions, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the undersigned members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered this 24th Day of July, 2013 do hereby urge President Barack Obama to issue an executive order empowering the Environmental Protection Agency to finalize proposed guidelines, move forward with rulemaking to restore critical protections to these waters under the Clean Water Act and reaffirm the broad scope of the Clean Water Act that existed for more than three decades.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That copies of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Honorable Barack H. Obama, President of the United States and Environment Illinois.

PROCO JOE MORENO Alderman – 1st Ward	JOHN A. POPE Alderman – 10th Ward	WILLIE B. COCHRAN Alderman – 20th Ward
RICARDO MUÑOZ Alderman – 22nd Ward	THOMAS TUNNEY Alderman – 44th Ward	George A. Cárdenas Alderman – 12th Ward