

March 14, 2016

**Testimony in support of House Bill 5043  
From Michigan Trout Unlimited  
To the House Natural Resources Committee**



Dear Committee Members,

Michigan Trout Unlimited is a 501C3 Michigan non-profit corporation, dedicated to the conservation of Michigan's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. We have 20 chapters across the state, over 7,500 active members, and represent the interests of approximately 400,000 citizen anglers of these species in Michigan.

We are writing to you now, to communicate our support of HB5043, which would facilitate that expansion of water level data collection efforts. As governmental agency budgets have been shrinking, and as new technology has been developed, it is now possible for citizens to help shoulder the burden of environmental monitoring. Our organization, as but one example, has a well-developed program of using citizens to help perform natural resource assessments. This bill would help facilitate the expansion of water level information collection in our state.

Michigan has approximately 76,000 miles of streams/rivers, and over 11,000 inland lakes. This sheer quantity makes it nearly impossible for the state agencies to assess or monitor all of those unique waters. This monitoring is needed for a very large set of purposes. One of these purposes is to help ensure the robustness of the State's water use programs (Part 327). We serve on the state's Water Use Advisory Committee, and were recently part of that group making recommendations to the DEQ on how to improve this program. Among the recommendations, were ones that specifically described the need for better data on stream flows, as well as water level fluctuations on inland lakes.

This bill would help to foster and expand current efforts that many agencies and organizations are participating in, to use citizens to help in the collection of this needed and beneficial data. We appreciate your support of this bill, and are available if you have any questions regarding it. Thank you for your support of HB5043.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Burroughs".

Dr. Bryan Burroughs  
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