

Senator Birkholz offered the following resolution:

**Senate Resolution No. 87.**

A resolution to urge the Governor to reestablish the Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council.

Whereas, On May 3, 2007, Governor Jennifer Granholm issued Executive Order No. 2007-8 to abolish the Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council and transfer all of the authority, powers, duties, functions, records, personnel, property, unexpended balances of appropriations, and allocations or other funds to the Department of Environmental Quality; and

Whereas, The Legislature created the Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council to help resolve the competing residential, industrial, agricultural, and recreational needs for good-quality groundwater in sufficient quantities. The Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council findings and recommendations were key to the development and passage of Michigan's first laws regulating water withdrawals; and

Whereas, Based on this successful model, the Legislature expanded the council's charge with the adoption of Public Act 34 of 2006 to design an interactive water withdrawal assessment tool to assist in determining whether a proposed withdrawal may adversely impact the waters or water-dependent natural resources of the state. Additionally, the council was instructed to make recommendations on whether the state should consider proposals to mitigate adverse impacts that may result from groundwater withdrawals; and

Whereas, The Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council developed an innovative water withdrawal assessment tool; however, it needs more time to complete its other charges. Council consensus has not been reached on many policy issues, including safety factors, the role of mitigation, how to value unique natural resources such as Michigan's blue ribbon trout streams, and how to balance social values with resource impacts. Additionally, the council has not yet come to consensus on recommendations regarding certain legal presumptions related to water withdrawals which may or may not require withdrawal permits; and

Whereas, With considerable work still remaining on policy issues, fine-tuning the Internet interface for using the water withdrawal assessment tool, disseminating information about the assessment tool to Michigan citizens, and developing and publishing documentation, this is not the time to cut short this dedicated and diverse group of volunteers' vital progress; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Governor to reestablish the Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the Governor.