

Senator Birkholz offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 168.

A resolution to urge the Great Lakes states and Ontario and the federal governments of the United States and Canada to ban permanently all directional drilling for oil and gas beneath the Great Lakes.

Whereas, The ongoing oil spill disaster in the Gulf of Mexico has dramatized the risks that accompany technological advances in oil exploration and remind us of our limitations in dealing with accidents of this magnitude. The encroaching destruction of sensitive fisheries, marshlands, and habitat is taking a huge toll on an entire way of life for many families; and

Whereas, The oil spill, which continues to defy containment, also serves as an object lesson of the need to ensure that such a tragedy never takes place in the Great Lakes. Apart from the many ways in which the experience in the Gulf of Mexico would be a harbinger of similar devastation to the Great Lakes, such an occurrence would be even worse if the same spill took place in the source of fresh water for tens of millions of Americans and Canadians. The nature of lakes would also present grave problems that could be felt for generations; and

Whereas, It is imperative that the strongest possible steps be taken to protect the lakes. The impact of the existing United States federal statute banning offshore and directional drilling beneath the Great Lakes should be strengthened by similar provisions at every level--state, provincial, and federal. There must be permanent bans in place across the board, representing a unified commitment. For the eight Great Lakes states, constitutional protections, along with the ban at the federal level, would be the strongest measures to put place, and similar steps need to be taken by the provincial government of Ontario and the Canadian federal government; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Great Lakes states and provinces and the federal governments of the United States and Canada to ban permanently all directional drilling for oil beneath the Great Lakes; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the governors and legislatures of the Great Lakes states, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the Office of the Prime Minister of Canada, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.