



**Legislative Bulletin.....July 24, 2007**

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**H.Con.Res. 187** — Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the dumping of industrial waste into the Great Lakes

**Summary of the Bills Under Consideration Today**

**Total Number of New Government Programs: 0**

**Total Cost of Discretionary Authorizations: \$0**

**Effect on Revenue: \$0**

**Total Change in Mandatory Spending: \$0**

**Total New State & Local Government Mandates: 0**

**Total New Private Sector Mandates: 0**

**Number of Bills Without Committee Reports: 0**

**Number of Reported Bills that Don't Cite Specific Clauses of Constitutional Authority: 0**

**H.Con.Res. 187 — Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the dumping of industrial waste into the Great Lakes (*Emanuel, D-IL*)**

**Order of Business:** H.Con.Res. 187 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, July 24, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

**Summary:** H.Con.Res. 187 would express the sense that the House of Representative that:

- **“Congress expresses its disapproval of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management’s issuance of a permit allowing BP to increase their daily dumping of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan;**
- “Congress urges the State of Indiana to reconsider issuance of a permit allowing BP to increase their daily dumping of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan;
- **“Congress should take action to protect and restore the Great Lakes;**
- “the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s actions in the Great Lakes basin should be consistent with the goal of preserving and restoring the Great Lakes; and
- “the United States Environmental Protection Agency should not allow increased dumping of chemicals and pollutants into the Great Lakes.”

The resolution lists the following findings:

- “the Great Lakes are the largest surface freshwater system on the planet;
- “the Great Lakes account for 95 percent of the United States’ surface fresh water and about 21 percent of the world’s supply;
- “the Great Lakes provide drinking water for more than 30 million Americans;
- “on May 18, 2004, President George W. Bush said ‘the Great Lakes are a national treasure’;
- “Congress has expressed its commitment to protecting the Great Lakes from pollutants and contaminants through the Clean Water Act and subsequent legislation;
- “the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Environment Canada joined together in promulgating the Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy to eliminate the presence of persistent toxic substances in the Great Lakes basin;
- “the ‘mixing zones’ that dilute toxic chemicals discharged into the Great Lakes system have been controversial as a possible threat to humans, fish and wildlife;
- “the Great Lakes are plagued by pollutants such as mercury, PCBs, ammonia, DDT, alkylated lead, hexachlorobenzene, TCDD, toxaphene, and others;
- “high amounts of ammonia can cause algae blooms that threaten fish and water quality;
- “the Indiana Department of Environmental Management recently issued a permit to BP PLC to allow their facility in Whiting, IN, to release 54 percent more ammonia and 35 percent more total suspended solids into Lake Michigan each day;
- “the BP Whiting facility will now be allowed to dump an average of 1,584 pounds of ammonia and 4,925 pounds of total suspended solids daily into Lake Michigan;
- “the Great Lakes already face myriad challenges from chemicals and pollutants, including a steep increase in fish consumption warnings and record numbers of beach closures; and

- “Congress has a clear role in protecting the Great Lakes as an entity that spans across State and international boundaries.”

**Additional Information:** According to the Water Resources Subcommittee, the changes being made at the BP plant will not result in a violation of federal water quality standards. Additionally, BP is complying with all federal and state water quality standards by meeting all Clean Water Act technology based requirements and other facility specific requirements applicable.

**Conservative Concerns:** Some conservatives may be concerned that this resolution would express Congress’ disapproval of a state agency’s decision in private state matters.

**Committee Action:** H.Con.Res. 187 was introduced on July 18, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which took no official action.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

**Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.

**Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?** No.

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