
Grendell Urges Property Rights Activists to Oppose Great Lakes Compact

Ohio State Senator Tim Grendell (R-18th District) is urging all property rights groups and their members to read the Great Lakes Compact before it is too late. The Great Lakes Compact purports to be the efforts of the Governors of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, „New York, and Minnesota and representatives of the Canadian Provinces of Quebec and Ontario to enter into an agreement to govern diversion of the waters of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

Grendell, however, noted that states who sign onto the compact may not notice an overlooked provision that will effectively decimate private property rights throughout the region. "Snuck into this bill is a small measure that has gone largely unnoticed. Section 1.3 declares that 'the Waters of the Basin are precious public natural resources **shared and held in trust** by the States.'" (Emphasis added)

Grendell explained that this small provision may seem innocuous, especially to those people not familiar with the public trust doctrine. The public trust doctrine is a common law principle that requires the government hold certain water resources in trust for the public. The public trust doctrine traditionally refers to natural lakes and navigable rivers that are subject to the public rights of navigation, commerce, fishery, and (in some states) recreation.

The Compact's definition of public trust extends the common usage to all of the "waters of the Basin," including "the Great Lakes and **all streams, rivers, lakes, connecting channels and ... tributary groundwater within the Basin**" (emphasis added).

Grendell explained, "In other words, the Compact would convert privately owned lakes, ponds, farm irrigation ditches, drainage ditches, well water, and wetlands into public property. This is an unprecedented taking of private property rights from individuals and businesses living within the Great Lakes Region."

Grendell is urging people to review the Compact (if you cannot access link, see: <http://cglg.org/> and in legislation proposed in various states), then contact state legislators to demand that they oppose any effort to ratify the Compact. Legislation is pending in (Ohio, New York, Michigan, and Illinois), but could be considered in (Pennsylvania, Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) very soon. "The legislation is a Trojan Horse that will take your private property rights and turn them over to the control of seven other states and two Canadian Provinces. Socialism may be acceptable in Canada, but it is not acceptable in Ohio."

Grendell encouraged the leadership of any interested property rights organization to contact his office to find out what they can do to stop this Compact and to get more information.

"There are a lot of people who are working hard to take away our private property rights. We need to defend them before it is too late."

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