

US Senator Debbie Stabenow
731 Hart Senate Office Building -- Washington, DC 20510
<https://www.stabenow.senate.gov/contact>

Subject: Restore Mid-Michigan Lakes

Dear Senator Stabenow:

As you wind down your esteemed Washington career, your friends and neighbors in Mid-Michigan seek your help.

We all know where we were the day the Mid-Michigan dams failed on May 19, 2020. There was property loss, but thanks to our first responders there was no loss of life. These dams were under federal (FERC) oversight for three decades before the failure. The 4 Lakes were gone in a matter of hours.

Thanks to **\$222.5 Million** in grants from the State of Michigan, we are 3-1/2 years into rebuilding. We value the leadership of the volunteer Four Lakes Task Force. **We appreciate the \$20 Million in grant support to date provided by the Federal government** coupled with the **\$5 Million** in private donations.

Just 3 years ago the average assessment costs to about 8,000 properties along the 4 Lakes to rebuild was \$525/YR.

As we continue the construction phase to rebuild the 4 dams, cost estimates from just 3 years ago have doubled. The culprits are a market flush with projects due to Federal infrastructure spending causing upward pricing pressure, compounding annual double-digit inflation, and escalating interest rates.

Today the estimated average assessment is \$2,171/YR. This includes a construction assessment that averages \$33,000 per property where annual payments over 40 years will exceed \$77,000 to individual property owners.

Here are proposed solutions for your consideration. We seek your help to get these formally considered:

- **Additional grant money** will reduce the cost for ALL property owners. The funding gap of \$217 Million can be addressed from a **combination of grants, appropriations, and earmarks** with combined state and federal support.
- Using the average, a **zero-interest loan** for construction provides the opportunity for annual relief of \$1,108 representing \$44,320 over 40 years to property owners.
- Using the average, an on-going **annual appropriation** of \$2 Million per year has the potential to eliminate the operations / maintenance assessment for property owners providing about \$245 in annual assessment relief.
- A **tax deduction** to recognize the contribution property owners make to help restore these dams.
- What programs can be put in place to help our **local businesses** along the lakes? Tax deductions, zero or low interest loan programs or assessment relief.
- What **other creative ideas** are available to help reduce the cost of assessments for ALL property owners?

Which concept can your team help with?

Before you leave Washington, remember Mid-Michigan. As I watch the evening news, I see the vast amount of money the Federal government allocates daily to help people from other countries. This includes aid to foreign countries, directly to individuals from other countries and personal loan forgiveness. I am simply seeking your help for my family, friends, and neighbors here in Michigan.

Federal grant(s) and other support like a zero-interest loan to the Four Lakes Special Assessment District will help rebuild a lake system deemed a Michigan jewel for generations to come while allowing property owners to contribute in a sustainable manner.

Congratulations on a wonderful career of service to Michigan . . . we seek your help one last time.

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME]
[PROPERTY ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE, ZIP]