

RESOLUTION 2024-04

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE LEAP PIPELINE WATER DIVERSION PROJECT

- WHEREAS, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (the “IEDC”) has planned a “LEAP (Limitless Exploration/Advanced Pace) Innovation District” located on more than 9,000 acres in Boone County without ensuring sufficient water resources were available for the businesses and industries to be recruited for locating in the LEAP Innovation District; and
- WHEREAS, the IEDC commenced construction planning of a pipeline to divert as much as 100 million gallons of water per day from the Wabash River aquifer and/or the Teays River aquifer in Tippecanoe County, as well as possibly other surrounding counties, to the LEAP Innovation District, which could jeopardize the water supply for aquifer-reliant residents; and
- WHEREAS, on November 13, 2023, Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb directed the Indiana Finance Authority to oversee the completion and validation of a water supply study for the LEAP Project; and
- WHEREAS, several Indiana communities in this region have passed legislation in opposition to the construction of the pipeline and diversion of water from the Wabash River aquifer and/or Teays River aquifer to the LEAP Innovation District, including the cities of Monticello, Attica, Lafayette, and West Lafayette, as well as the counties of Miami, Benton, and Tippecanoe, with Tippecanoe County passing an ordinance placing a nine-month moratorium on the export of high volumes of water outside of the county; and
- WHEREAS, these communities are chiefly concerned with the potential for negative ecological and economic development consequences within their communities due to diverting water from their residents’ primary water source; and
- WHEREAS, members of the public within communities in the impacted region, as well as consumer and environmental advocacy organizations, have spoken out against the LEAP Project, criticizing the IEDC’s lack of transparency in initiating the project, the State’s position of using water as an economic development tool, and the significant costs of the Project that could burden taxpayers across the state of Indiana as well as reduced water affordability for residents whose water supply has been siphoned; and
- WHEREAS, in response to this opposition, in mid-December of 2023, Governor Holcomb paused action on the Project until the IFA water study is complete; and
- WHEREAS, the reallocation of fundamental resources, like water, in order to further economic development projects in one region of the state at the expense of another, is an unwise policy practice that should not be supported in this or any future instance; and
- WHEREAS, Monroe County faced a similar issue in 2006, in which a 60-mile water pipeline construction project was proposed, and ultimately not pursued, that would have diverted water from Lake Monroe to Indianapolis at a rate of 90 million gallons of water per day; and
- WHEREAS, by adopting this resolution, the Bloomington Common Council hereby expresses its opposition to the LEAP pipeline water diversion project and stands in support of Indiana cities and towns, counties, and rural and agricultural areas that would be impacted by the proposed diversion of millions of gallons of water from their primary water supply;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA, THAT:

SECTION 1. The City of Bloomington hereby expresses its opposition to the construction of a pipeline and diversion of water from the Wabash River aquifer and/or the Teays River aquifer to the LEAP Innovation District in Boone County.

SECTION 2. The Clerk shall send a copy of this resolution, duly adopted, to the Indiana General Assembly, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, the Indiana Finance Authority, the Indiana Secretary of Commerce, and Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this _____ day of _____, 2024.

ISABEL PIEDMONT-SMITH, President
Bloomington Common Council

ATTEST:

NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk
City of Bloomington

PRESENTED by me to the Mayor of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana upon this _____ day of _____, 2024.

NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk
City of Bloomington

SIGNED and APPROVED by me upon this _____ day of _____, 2024.

KERRY THOMSON, Mayor
City of Bloomington

SYNOPSIS

This resolution is sponsored by Councilmember Ruff. It expresses the Common Council's opposition to the Indiana Economic Development Corporation's proposed Limitless Exploration / Advanced Pace Innovation District Project that would divert water from the Wabash River aquifer and/or Teays River aquifer, which may impact Hoosiers who rely on these aquifers for their water supply. This resolution also directs the City Clerk to send copies of the resolution to the Indiana General Assembly, Indiana Economic Development Corporation, the Indiana Finance Authority, the Indiana Secretary of Commerce, and Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb.