

Resolve 11-12/13

Passage as amended: 7-2 (Leeman, Brennan) 5/20/13

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CITY OF PORTLAND

IN THE CITY COUNCIL

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RESOLUTION TO PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF LOCAL CITIZENS AND PORTLAND'S NATURAL RESOURCES FROM THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF TAR SANDS OIL

WHEREAS, the City of Portland intends to protect the natural resources on which the City depends, including but not limited to: its land resources; source of drinking water at Sebago Lake; and its marine and aquatic resources including Portland Harbor, Casco Bay, and the rivers and tributaries passing through and adjacent to Portland; and

WHEREAS, tar sands (a.k.a. oil sands or bituminous sand) is a combination of clay, sand, water and bitumen. Tar sands are mined and processed to extract the oil-rich bitumen, which is then refined into an extra heavy crude oil; and

WHEREAS, nationwide, in the last three years, there have been two major pipeline ruptures and an unspecified number of minor ruptures of pipelines carrying tar sands oil; and

WHEREAS, the July 2010 pipeline rupture in Marshall, Michigan resulted in a spill estimated to be more than 819,000 gallons of tar sands oil and contaminated 35 miles of the Kalamazoo River and Morrow Lake. As of March 14, 2013 the spill has not been fully cleaned-up. The EPA has ordered dredging in sections of the river and in Morrow Lake Delta. The total clean-up cost reached \$809 million in 2012 and is increasing, more than any non-ocean spill on record; and

WHEREAS, the March 2013 pipeline rupture in Mayflower, Arkansas spilled more than an estimated 157,500 gallons of tar sands oil and is still underway, but has resulted in the evacuation of approximately 22 homes, and the clean-up of approximately 28,000 barrels of oily water; and

WHEREAS, the spills occurred on pipelines that had carried non-tar sands oil for years, but had not been specifically designed to carry tar sands oil; and

WHEREAS, tar sands oil alone weighs more than water. However, tar sands oil is diluted with solvents to decrease the viscosity of the tar sands oil. This allows it to flow through a pipeline while also decreasing its weight compared to water; and

WHEREAS, the solvents may separate from tar sands oil in the event of a spill in which case the oil will sink quickly. In such instances, damage may be greater and clean-up more expensive than it would be with other lighter crude oils; and

WHEREAS, techniques for cleaning-up tar sands oil in marine and aquatic environments are still not fully developed and are experimental or difficult; and

WHEREAS, the Portland-Montreal pipeline crosses the Sebago Lake watershed, (Portland's source of drinking water) and terminates at Portland Harbor and Casco Bay, important resources to Portland's economic and recreational wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, the Portland-Montreal pipeline could be, in the future considered for carrying tar sands oil to Portland Harbor;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council expresses its concern due to the risk to Portland's natural resources and citizens, of transporting tar sands oil in proximity to Portland's natural resources, specifically Casco Bay and Sebago Lake upon which the city depends; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Council supports the creation of clear Federal and State guidelines for tracking the chemical composition of pipeline transported fuels so that local governments, citizens, and first responders can better understand, and plan for, the risks associated with the specific type of fuel flowing through or to their communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council transmit a copy of this Resolution to Maine's Congressional delegation, Gov. Paul LePage, Maine State House and Senate leadership, the U.S. State Department, President of the United States, CEO of Portland Pipe Line Corporation, and the Canadian Consulate in Boston.