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## **Great Lakes leaders: In wake of Flint Water Crisis, Gov. Snyder must appoint an MDEQ director who prioritizes human health, clean water**

LANSING—In a [letter](#) released today, leaders of Michigan’s environmental and conservation community called on Gov. **Rick Snyder** to make human health and the protection of clean water top priorities in his administration. Snyder’s appointment of a new director of the **Michigan Department of Environmental Quality** (MDEQ) will be a key barometer of his seriousness about change at the department.

“Unfortunately, Michiganders now know all-too-well what happens when our state government fails to protect public health and clean water,” said **Lisa Wozniak**, executive director, **Michigan League of Conservation Voters**. “Gov. Snyder now has an opportunity to begin to redefine his legacy by appointing a new head of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality who will put human health and environmental protection back at the center of the department’s mission.”

In a [letter](#) to Gov. Snyder, eleven environmental and conservation organizational leaders declared Snyder’s appointment of a new MDEQ director an opportunity to begin to rebuild trust in state government.

“We need a leader at the MDEQ committed to the critically-important mission of protecting the health and natural resources of all Michigan communities,” said **Rebecca Fedewa**, executive director of the **Flint River Watershed Coalition**. “To demonstrate that he has truly learned from what happened in Flint, Governor Snyder needs to appoint a pro-conservation, pro-public health director to the MDEQ who can hit the ground running on day one.”

Snyder’s Flint Water Advisory Task Force concluded that the primary responsibility for the Flint water crisis resided within MDEQ and called for a culture change at the department in its Dec. 29 [letter](#) to the governor.

“The governor needs to rebuild the trust of all Michiganders by re-dedicating his administration to standing up for public health, clean water, clean air, and healthy wildlife,” said **Mike Shriberg**, Great Lakes regional executive director for the **National Wildlife Federation**. “The people of Michigan deserve to know that the governor is going to fight tooth and nail to make environment and public health protection a No. 1 priority.”

“There are no simple answers to the Flint crisis, but there is a chance to write a new chapter in Michigan’s commitment to public health and the environment,” said **Joel Brammeier**, president and CEO of **Alliance for the Great Lakes**. “With the right leadership and actions at MDEQ, Governor Snyder could put Michigan —the state that helped turn the Great Lakes into a national priority — back on track toward listening to people, enforcing our laws, and protecting every resident of Michigan.”

**The following eleven organizations signed on to the letter:** Alliance for the Great Lakes, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, Flint River Watershed Coalition, FLOW – For Love Of Water, Huron River Watershed Council, Michigan Environmental Council, Michigan League of Conservation Voters,

National Wildlife Federation, The Stewardship Network, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC).

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