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Plan classifying burning hazardous waste, tires as 'renewable energy' is step backward

House bill poses a threat to children's health, natural resources

LANSING—Children's health and environmental advocates today stood in opposition to House Bill 5205, calling it a step backward for clean, renewable energy that puts children's health at risk because it includes dangerous hazardous industrial waste as a form of "renewable energy." The House Energy and Technology Committee passed HB 5205, sponsored by State Representative Aric Nesbitt (R – Lawton), today by a count of 17 in favor, 3 opposed and 2 passed.

"House Bill 5205 will allow polluters to burn tires and call it 'renewable energy' – that's not only absurd, it's a dangerous step backwards for Michigan," said **Lisa Wozniak**, Executive Director of the **Michigan League of Conservation Voters**. "We should be opening the door to real renewable energy, not more pollution that politicians are cynically trying to disguise as renewable energy. Michigan's clean energy industry is thriving, it's creating jobs and reducing energy costs, and it's making our air safer to breathe and water safer to drink."

Under the 2008 Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act, Michigan utilities must generate 10 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2015. Michigan utility companies are on track to meet this standard, which is set to expire next year. Since enactment of the law, the costs of wind and solar have decreased dramatically. House Bill 5205 sets a dangerous precedent by changing the scientific definition of renewable energy to include hazardous industrial waste.

"Michigan's asthma rate is 10 percent higher than the national average and we should be taking steps to reduce pollution, not encourage more of it," said **Wibke Heymach**, Midwest Regional Manager for **Moms Clean Air Force**. "This bill would allow dirty, harmful contaminants to be counted as renewable energy, resulting in more air pollution and more health problems for Michiganders. We need to use legitimate sources of clean, renewable energy to protect the health of our families."

Michigan currently gets more than half of its electricity from burning coal, which emits dangerous pollutants into the air, land and Great Lakes. These pollutants are known to cause health complications including asthma, lung and heart disease.

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Michigan League of Conservation Voters is Michigan's leading non-partisan political voice for land, air and water. Visit our website: <http://www.michiganlcv.org>.

Moms Clean Air Force is a national movement of moms and dads who are protecting children's rights to clean air. Visit our website: <http://www.momscleanairforce.org>.