

To all Leelanau County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed establishment of the "Lake Leelanau Preservation Board" (hereafter "Lake Board").

I am a Leelanau county resident, a lakefront owner, and I am concerned about the Eurasian watermilfoil problem in Lake Leelanau.

I agree that the problem must be addressed, as the risk to the lake is too great. However, I have the following concerns about the creation of the board.

The Lake Board would be able to spend any amount they deem necessary to combat invasive species. There is no statutory limit in this amount. The citizens who will be directly responsible for paying the bill for these expenditures will have no vote as to the amount spent or the nature of the projects. This is taxation without representation. It would create an autonomous Lake Board that is not accountable to the citizens of Leelanau County or the lakefront owners. It is undemocratic.

The Lake Board would only be required to have one representative from among lakefront owners, and that is the only member of the board that would be subject to term limits. The only elected official would be a member of the county commission. All other members are appointed, and could be on the board for a lifetime.

Yes, act 309 allows for public hearings, but there is no requirement to follow the input gathered from such hearings. These hearings would be open to anyone and everyone. Non-lakefront owners and even those who are not citizens of Leelanau County can attend these meetings and give input as to the amounts spent and the projects pursued. Meetings that would determine what **ONLY THE LAKEFRONT OWNERS WOULD HAVE TO PAY**.

Once created, this board has almost unlimited authority to pursue any project of any amount as long as it is related to invasive species. There are no time limitations, or budgetary limitations. There is no vote of the waterfront owners (the one who would be responsible for payment of any assessment) to elect the members of the board, or approve or disapprove any assessment or project. They will just be required to pay their assessment, or surrender their property, and to do so without any real representation.

I ask you to reject the creation of the Lake Board and to provide a path to a democratic and equitable solution to the Eurasian Watermilfoil Problem in Lake Leelanau. This Lake belongs to the entire county, and provides benefits to the entire county. Let's all work on this together to find a solution.

Thank you for your time.