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SB 581 WILL UP-END INDIANA'S LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Dear House Judiciary Committee Chairman Tors and Members:

The City of Michigan City has had a long-standing, valuable relationship with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan Coastal Program since its inception in 2003. Michigan City is concerned that SB 581 would disrupt this long-standing state-local government partnership by pre-empting the local ordinances necessary to implement coastal zone programs.

Senate Bill 581's proposal to supersede all local government coastal management rules and ordinances with uniform DNR regulations misunderstands the necessity of local government ordinances to carry out the Lake Michigan Coastal Program. This long-standing partnership in coastal zone management on Indiana's diverse Lake Michigan coast has been both effective and cost-effective for the State of Indiana.

▶ The purpose of the Lake Michigan Coastal Program is stated as follows. "The purpose of the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program is to enhance the state's role in planning for and managing natural and cultural resources in the coastal region and to support partnerships between federal, state and local agencies and organizations. The Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program (LMCP) relies upon existing laws and programs as the basis for achieving its purpose."

▶ A Coastal Advisory Board, of which Michigan City and many other Lake Michigan coastal communities are members, provides the DNR with vital information on the diverse coastal issues faced by each community.

▶ The DNR's Technical Assistance Program does not implement coastal zone programs by itself, but rather distributes federal coastal zone management funds and provides technical planning assistance to units of local government to guide the development of comprehensive plans and ordinances which address the unique coastal management issues faced by each community.

Many coastal communities will be greatly affected if SB 581 becomes a reality. For example, the funding and technical assistance provided through this partnership is paramount to Michigan City's success in green space development, natural resource planning, restoration,

and preservation goals. Since the Lake Michigan Coastal Program's inception in 2003, Michigan City has been awarded over 1 million dollars in DNR administered federal grant funding to implement these programs through its own ordinances. Other coastal communities are carrying out similar programs.

Michigan City has made major investments in our community's natural resources and we oppose any legislation that would alter or end our ability to effectively implement the Lake Michigan Coastal Program on the coastal lands within our jurisdiction.

Respectfully submitted,



Shannon Eason
Assistant Park Superintendent
Coastal Advisory Member 2015-2019