

NEWS RELEASE

Commissioner Eileen Kowall to introduce resolution requesting report on condition and safety of Oakland County dams

June 4, 2020, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – At tonight’s board meeting, Commissioner **Eileen T. Kowall** (R-White Lake) will introduce a resolution requesting that the Water Resources Commissioner (WRC) provide a report on the condition of all dams and other control structures that regulate lake levels in Oakland County.

“The recent disaster in Midland shines a spotlight on Michigan’s aging critical infrastructure,” Kowall said. “It is crucial that we understand the current condition of our dams in order to prevent something similar from happening in Oakland County. The safety and well-being of our residents and businesses is at stake.”

Currently, there are no national standards for inspecting dams, which has led to a patchwork of state regulations and a system that is largely powerless to require stakeholders to make desperately needed maintenance and repairs.

There are approximately 150 dams in Oakland County under various ownership. The WRC maintains normal lake levels for 54 lakes in Oakland County and employs one (1) staff engineer and three (3) lake level control technicians that operate and maintain 36 control structures and eight (8) augmentation pumps. In some cases, the level of more than one lake is controlled from a single structure.

The resolution being introduced tonight would require the WRC to provide the Board with an initial report within 30 days of the resolution’s adoption and an annual report at the end of each calendar year. These reports would be made publicly available online and would include information on the control structure’s condition and rating, date of last inspection and annual maintenance and repair budget.

If approved, the resolution will be referred to the Board’s Health, Safety and Human Services Committee. After passing through committee, it would then be presented to the full Board for a final vote.

Kowall represents the 6th county commission district, which includes White Lake Township and a portion of Waterford Township.

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