

**Originating Committee:** Rivers, Streams, and Fisheries

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**Intended Recipients:** Missouri General Assembly, Governor, and Lieutenant Governor

**Support For Reinstating the Public Interest Majority on the Missouri Clean Water Commission**

**WHEREAS**, the Missouri Clean Water Commission (Commission) is a seven-member board appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission brings together and coordinates all aspects of water quality in an effort to ensure the state's progress toward protecting, preserving, and improving water quality; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission implements federal clean water law through rules and policies and hears appeals based on permit decisions; and

**WHEREAS**, when necessary, the Commission will take enforcement action against those who violate the Missouri Clean Water Law and related regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission establishes funding priorities and oversees financial assistance to protect and preserve water quality; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission plays a critical role in the establishment of water quality standards throughout Missouri and approves point-source pollution permits; and

**WHEREAS**, before 2016, the seven-member commission required at least four members representing the public interest, no more than two members representing agriculture, industry, or mining interests, and one member to represent publicly owned wastewater interests; and

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 1713 was passed by the Missouri General Assembly in 2016, which included an amendment to remove the mandatory public interest majority on the Commission by allowing up to six agriculture, industry, or mining interests to be represented along with one member representing publicly owned wastewater interests; and

**WHEREAS**, the amendment to remove the public interest majority on the Commission in House Bill 1713 was added toward the end of the legislative session; and

**WHEREAS**, the amendment was never a stand-alone bill that received a committee hearing where the public could testify in opposition to removing the public interest majority on the Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Jay Nixon included in his veto letter of House Bill 1713 that "Decreasing the public's voice on this commission that has been involved in overseeing our state's water quality for over 40 years is wrong and cannot receive my support," and "...the

change to Missouri Clean Water Commission membership is a blatant attempt to limit public oversight in favor of regulated interests,”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Missouri General Assembly overrode the veto of Governor Nixon; and

**WHEREAS**, the public’s role in overseeing and implementing the rules and regulations before the Clean Water Commission is critical for ensuring clean water in Missouri; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) assembled in Osage Beach, Missouri, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2022, supports the passage of House Bill 2059 and any future similar legislation before the Missouri General Assembly to reinstate the public interest majority on the Missouri Clean Water Commission; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that CFM urges Governor Parson and future Governors to ensure that at least four members of the Clean Water Commission possess water quality expertise and are not associated with agriculture, industry, or mining interests.

Searchable Keywords: Missouri Clean Water Commission, water quality

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