

**Toledoans for Safe Water Reaches Goal!  
Will submit signatures to put  
Lake Erie Bill of Rights Charter Amendment on the ballot**

**Government is not protecting the Lake,  
it is time for the people to take the reins**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
August 5, 2018**

**Contact:**

Markie Miller  
Organizer, Toledoans for Safe Water  
419-509-0249  
[safewatertoledo@gmail.com](mailto:safewatertoledo@gmail.com)

Crystal Jankowski  
Organizer, Toledoans for Safe Water  
419-575-2318

**Toledo, OH** - Toledoans for Safe Water, a grassroots community organization, will hold a press conference Monday morning (August 6) at 10:15AM in the lobby of One Government Center. The all-volunteer group of residents will be submitting 10,500 signatures for the Lake Erie Bill of Rights (LEBOR) - approximately double the number required by the Ohio Constitution.

The Lake Erie Bill of Rights, a first-in-the-nation Ecosystem Rights of Nature initiative by the people, will enshrine in the Toledo City Charter that the Lake Erie watershed and ecosystem have legal rights, the right to exist and flourish. This will form the basis of a new legal framework for addressing environmental issues by giving citizen groups standing to sue major polluters on behalf of Lake Erie in civil court, enabling citizens to directly address pollution and harm to their drinking water before the harm occurs.

Lake Erie Bill of Rights organizer Markie Miller said *"Toledoans are using their right to self-governance to protect the resources we rely on and create the community we envision. Four years ago we lost access to our drinking water and had to face our vulnerability. This should have been a wakeup call to initiate policies that prevent pollution and harm, instead we continue to see these activities protected. We need policies that empower the people and take serious action to protect the lake. LEBOR is the people taking back their authority to govern and protect Lake Erie, which people and many other species all depend on for survival."*

The initiative was drafted by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) at the invitation of Toledoans for Safe Water as a result of frustration felt by Toledoans at years of inaction by the government. Since 2006, CELDF has partnered with dozens of communities across more than 10 states to enact Rights of Nature laws. It currently works in Nepal, India, Cameroon, Colombia, Australia, and other countries. The introduction of the Lake Erie Bill of Rights will establish Toledo as a leader in the growing national movement embracing Community Rights and Rights of Nature.

WHERE: One Government Center, downtown Toledo  
WHEN: Monday, August 6  
TIME: 10:15 AM

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