

WisOpinion Poll: Should the state allow Racine to divert Lake Michigan water for Foxconn?

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The city of Racine's request to divert up to 7 million gallons of Lake Michigan water to the Foxconn development site is getting pushback from conservation groups.

This comes after city officials have asked the Department of Natural Resources for permission to redirect the water to Mount Pleasant. The water will chiefly be used to fulfill the Taiwanese manufacturer's anticipated water needs.

Many who spoke out against the request at a public hearing in Sturtevant March 7 argued that diverting Lake Michigan water for a corporation would violate the 2008 Great Lakes Compact, a multi-state agreement to cap the amount of water leaving the lakes' drainage basin.

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Government Affairs Director Jennifer Giegerich also argued approving the city's ask would set a dangerous precedent for the future.

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"If we don't do it right... then we are going to lose every opportunity we have to protect this thing that has made Wisconsin such a great place to live," she said.

But Foxconn in a statement said the company is "fully committed ... to being a responsible corporate citizen," touting its businesses practices and a pledge to get rid of pollutants in wastewater as well as utilize equipment aimed at conserving and reusing water.

"Our compliance with all relevant regulations and a commitment to uphold the high

environmental standards we set for ourselves will be regularly audited by various government agencies and our internal compliance teams,” the statement said.

Racine drew nearly 17 million gallons of water per day from the lake in 2016, according to the city’s application. The city in the past pumped more water but has seen declining residential and industrial demand over the past 20 years.

Members of the public can submit written comments on the request until March 21.

See more from the DNR on the application process:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2018/dept-of-natural-resources-dnr-to-hold-hearing-on-racine-water-diversion-march-7-in-sturtevant-public-may-provide-comments-until-march-21>

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