

From: Angus Wong [mailto:angus@sumofus.org]

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:26 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX; OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Simpson.MLA, Shane L LASS:EX

Subject: 110,000 signatures on Petition to BC Government regarding Water Sustainability Act

Hi,

As a BC resident and campaigner at SumOfUs.org, I would like to officially present the following petition, signed by over 110,000 SumOfUs.org members, calling on the BC Government to enact groundwater regulations that protect British Columbia's water from corporate freeloaders. You can see the petition text here: <http://action.sumofus.org/a/nestle-freeloading-off-BC/>

We understand that the BC Government is inviting feedback on *A Water Sustainability Act for BC: A Legislative Proposal* until Nov. 15th, 2013. In addition to making you aware of the petition, I would like to submit the following comments on behalf of our 110,000 members who have signed the petition:

+*The water use fees needs to be higher* -- At 85 cents per 1,000 cubic meters, the rate is too low. A foreign company like Nestle is paying one third of the per unit price compared to residents. The fees should not only cover administrative costs, but cover related water management and governance activities. The fees should also be earmarked for a more comprehensive approach to water management instead of being directed into the province's general revenue.

+*There is a lack of public participation in local decision making* -- Watersheds often cover a large area, and affected residents should be involved in decisions including the granting of water license. In particular, First Nations groups should also participate in the drafting of the Water Act. The Act should also include provisions for public notice of application and public hearings, the right for residents for BC to object to license issuance, and the ability of the public to appeal the granting of the license.

+*There is a lack of legal commitment to set waters aside for nature* -- BC's nature is our most precious resource, and we need mandatory commitments by the government to protect marine life in the province. We need legally established standards, not guidelines, for critical environmental protections.

+*The Water Sustainability Act must apply to all fresh water users in the provinces* -- The current proposal implies that oil and gas and forestry sectors could be except from the Act.

We have and will be communicating to our members about the process of drafting of the Water Sustainability Act as it proceeds. We look forward to seeing our comments reflected in the final draft of the Act.

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Angus Wong
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