
From: Muchmore, Dennis (GOV)
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 3:36 PM
To: McBride, Bill (GOV)
Cc: Wurfel, Sara (GOV); Agen, Jarrod (GOV); Clement, Elizabeth (GOV); Hollins, Harvey (GOV); Scott, Allison (GOV); Walsh, John (GOV); Baird, Richard (GOV)
Subject: RE: request for comment on congressman's letter
Attachments: Kildee nov 13 2015 latest letter.pdf

I do not believe we should respond to this over the top letter for both legal and philosophical reasons. Responding to this just feeds his narrative. How about we not issue a letter in response? Here's my issues:

1. First paragraph, top of second page. "...additional steps that need to be taken to remediate the damage done to the people of Flint due to the failures at the state government level, alongside the forgiveness of Flint's Revolving Funds loan debt if that becomes available." All of these emotionally charged and essentially unfounded accusations suggest the state's culpability in levying damages to "the people of Flint". There are definitely people in Flint (mostly poor and without many resources but also many other people) struggling with an old system, brown water, lead and unsavory health problems that have been put through several months of alarm and struggle, but let's try to deal with human beings and not political bombast. Let's identify and solve problems. Literally hundreds of state employees have worked night and day to resolve these issues. Are we going to blame state employees indiscriminately when our people were simply trying to do their jobs to the best of their ability and were unable to anticipate (for whatever reason) all the consequences?
2. First bullet point. "...and other state resources such as the rainy day and general funds to repair damage done...". Sorry, but we're not going to commit the general fund to repair "...Flint's water distribution system." What does that mean? And if we sign on to that then where does it stop and what repairs?
3. Second paragraph. "...hundreds of millions of dollars of damage...". Where did this come from? I take it the Congressman is now a self-appointed expert on water systems and their cost?
4. Second bullet. "...the state create a fund for ongoing assistance..." We already have several funds to deal with lead exposure and we have multiple programs, WIC, Medicaid, health endowment, etc. to assist people in need. Why would we create another fund?
5. Third paragraph. "...need for significant investments in the local health system in order to respond...". We already make significant investments in the local system. They were able to identify the danger early and I would assume they will be significant players in the future. Additionally, DHHS has a myriad of programs already in place to assist the local health system, which I don't need to remind everyone is a city owned hospital and for whatever reason never consulted by the city when the KWA conversion was being studied and proposed. That system also never objected nor tested the Flint River before, even though the river was always the city's source backup. Even the proposal prior to the state's involvement considered using two million gallons of Flint River water and that was a public record. But, that's another issue best left to another time.
6. Third bullet. "...rescind Flint's obligation to provide \$2 million for the cost of connecting...". The state gave the city \$2.1 million to help the water system during the summer, and part of the agreement to get the \$6 million from the legislature for the emergency was contingent on Flint contributing a share.
7. Fourth paragraph. "...for the state's failures is an abdication of clear responsibility...". First of all, it's not a state's failures, it is a perhaps avoidable mistake made with the corrosives that was unacceptable to us, the Director and Governor are taking actions to fix the problems, the health and wellness of the people of Flint is our absolute concern, and it's not an abdication of clear responsibility. The "...state-appointed emergency manager was in charge..." may well be accurate for the physical change, but the decision to leave the Detroit system was made when the city, the Mayor, the council, the county, local leaders and the KWA was devised and that was well before the physical change.

For these reasons and others, I'd prefer Sara's general assistance and aid comments and not responding to the letter.

From: Hollins, Harvey (GOV)
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 1:19 PM
To: Muchmore, Dennis (GOV) <muchmored@michigan.gov>
Cc: Wurfel, Sara (GOV) <Wurfels@michigan.gov>; McBride, Bill (GOV) <mcbrideb@michigan.gov>; Agen, Jarrod (GOV) <AgenJ@michigan.gov>; Clement, Elizabeth (GOV) <clemente@michigan.gov>
Subject: Re: request for comment on congressman's letter

That's what I suggested; however after given it second thought, I think a simple reply should go something like:

"Thank you for your concerns regarding Flint. I've established a task force of experts who will advise us how to proceed, and I will be more than happy to send you their findings to you."

Best,
Harvey Hollins III, Director
Governor's Office of Urban Initiatives

313.456.4994 (office)
PPI (Cell)

On Nov 17, 2015, at 11:30 AM, Muchmore, Dennis (GOV) <muchmored@michigan.gov> wrote:

I think we should ignore the letter. We gain nothing by responding. I will send to Dan separately unless you all go crazy.

From: Wurfel, Sara (GOV)
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 10:06 AM
To: McBride, Bill (GOV) <mcbrideb@michigan.gov>; Agen, Jarrod (GOV) <AgenJ@michigan.gov>; Muchmore, Dennis (GOV) <muchmored@michigan.gov>; Agen, Jarrod (GOV) <AgenJ@michigan.gov>; Clement, Elizabeth (GOV) <clemente@michigan.gov>; Hollins, Harvey (GOV) <hollinsh@michigan.gov>
Subject: FW: request for comment on congressman's letter

Please see below. Know we talked about this yesterday briefly at senior staff. What is status of response? Otherwise, will stick to basics and focus on moving forward piece, along with seeing if any specific updates from DEQ.

From: Ronald Fonger [mailto:RFONGER1@mlive.com]
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 9:53 AM
To: Wurfel, Sara (GOV) <Wurfels@michigan.gov>
Subject: request for comment on congressman's letter

Hi Sara:
I've attached a copy of a letter Congressman Kildee sent to Gov. Snyder last week concerning Flint water issues.
I didn't know if there has been a formal reply and/or if you would want to comment on it.
Thanks,

Ron Fonger