

# Opinion

## Lawmakers must reform Eminent Domain laws

Dear Editor:

Many of your readers may be unaware, as I was, that four pipelines full of toxic oil cut through Clark County from NW to SW.

Now, Enbridge Partners, the Canadian company that owns them, wants to install a fifth pipe, which they call Line 66 or "the Line 61 twin." The new pipeline would carry tar sands oil, the dirtiest fuel on earth.

If you have asthma or a lung disease, being exposed to the exhaust from this fuel will make your symptoms worse. Because tar sands are the consistency of peanut butter, the oil companies mix them with toxic chemicals to make them flow. When these pipelines leak or rupture, as they often do, we are all in danger.

People don't know that Enbridge has a very bad safety record. From 1999 to 2010, they had 804 spills. The largest was in Marshall, MI, in July 2010, when a massive rupture spilled almost a million gallons of tar sands oil over 17 hours.

It ruined 35 miles of the Kalamazoo River. They have spent \$1.2 billion to clean it up, but about 15 percent of the oil remains and will probably never be cleaned up.

Imagine if a spill happened in the Black River (the lines cross it just north of Withee) or the Yellow River (they cross it just south of Gilman). Is it worth the risk?

And then there is the matter of Eminent Domain for Private Gain. Why should a private, foreign company be able to seize people's land for a pipeline?

Our elected officials at the state level should reform the Eminent Domain laws to make this impossible. A pipeline taking the dirtiest fuel to market is not benefiting the public.

Our Clark County Board should follow the example of the Wood County Board and pass a resolution for Eminent Domain reform.

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