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Great Lakes summit worthwhile for Marquette, area

June 24, 2013

The Mining Journal

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It's fantastic to finally see a concrete example of governmental cooperation.

On Thursday, an angry Gov. Rick Snyder was left shaking his fist after the State Senate - divided on the issue of whether to approve a Medicaid expansion - adjourned to vacation without even voting on the issue.

This is the type of behavior we're accustomed to seeing from our elected representatives.

But that same day, the Marquette Regional History Center was playing host to the annual conference of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

The event was hosted by the Superior Watershed Partnership, in conjunction with the city, the Marquette Downtown Development Authority and the city arts and culture department.

Unlike the recent showing from Lansing, the GLSLCI has proven to be a great example of governmental cooperation and we're pleased the city of Marquette is involved with such an organization.

In its first decade of existence, the GLSLCI has grown in size from 20 member cities to more than 100 and now represents municipalities across eight U.S. states and two Canadian provinces.

As Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett said in a Thursday interview with The Mining Journal, the organization helps to lower the barriers faced by small cities seeking a voice in Great Lakes politics.

"Marquette's voice is as loud as Chicago's or Detroit's or Toronto, anybody," he said. "Being part of the organization is huge."

The group is a nonprofit coalition that works to advance protection and restoration efforts related to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, while attempting to address long-term economic concerns.

Thursday's panel discussion focused on a sustainable Great Lakes economy, the struggle to balance economic and environmental concerns in mining endeavors, climate change and shoreline protection efforts.

Marquette is one of the more isolated cities on the Great Lakes and it is far from the most populous, but national and global decisions related to the Great Lakes will have a significant impact locally.

For that reason, we applaud the city for working with the GLSLCI, and we thank the SWP for hosting the event here last week.

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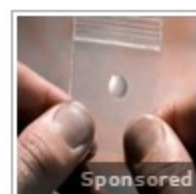
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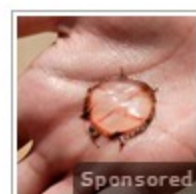
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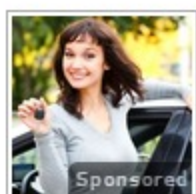
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