



Great Lakes-St. Lawrence  
Legislative Caucus

## 2018 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus

*Erie, Pennsylvania  
September 21-22, 2018*

### Resolution of Tribute to the Late Patricia Birkholz

- WHEREAS,** on May 3, 2018, the Great Lakes lost one of its most passionate and influential champions with the passing of Patricia (Patty) Birkholz, a Michigan native who devoted 45 years of her life to public service and was committed to protecting the environment, particularly the Great Lakes, for current and future generations; and
- WHEREAS,** during her tenure in the Michigan Senate, Patty secured the passage of landmark legislation to establish the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, as well as legislation to establish the nation's most stringent ballast water discharge standards to protect the Great Lakes from the introduction of aquatic invasive species; and
- WHEREAS,** in 2003, Patty secured the passage of Michigan Senate Concurrent Resolution 5, "calling for the creation of a Great Lakes Legislative Caucus" and calling on "the legislatures of Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin and the legislative bodies of Ontario and Québec" to join Michigan in "developing this vehicle to address the many Great Lakes issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries;" and
- WHEREAS,** in SCR 5, Patty expressed her belief that "the challenges facing the Great Lakes can only be met successfully through a well-coordinated and systematic approach" and that "legislation impacting the Great Lakes will be far more effective if it is based on information developed and shared by policymakers from the entire Great Lakes region;" and
- WHEREAS,** as expressed in SCR 5, Patty believed that bringing "key Great Lakes lawmakers together regularly to share knowledge and hear other perspectives would be invaluable in improving the impact and uniformity of practices established in statute" and would create "a more unified and stronger voice on specific issues;" and
- WHEREAS,** fulfilling Patty's vision, the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus was established in 2003 and held its first meeting that same year, with Patty



MIDWEST

serving as the first chair of the Caucus until her retirement from the Michigan Senate in 2010; and

**WHEREAS,** in 2018, the GLLC held a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Policy Institute to bring legislators from across the Great Lakes region together to study a specific issue on the GLLC's policy agenda and to develop a plan for taking coordinated regional action to address the issue; and

**WHEREAS,** the GLLC intends to establish these Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Policy Institutes as a core activity to focus the Caucus's work on advancing its policy agenda so that the Great Lakes continue to provide a plentiful source of clean, affordable water to the region's residents, businesses, and industries; and

**WHEREAS,** the purpose of these policy institutes captures the spirit of Patty's vision for the GLLC as an organization of state and provincial legislators collaborating on policy related to the Great Lakes; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED,** that, as an expression of our highest regard for Patty Birkholz and our great appreciation for her vision, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus will name each future policy institute "The Patricia Birkholz Institute for Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Policy;" and be it further

**RESOLVED,** that this resolution be shared with the Birkholz family to show our lasting gratitude to Patty as the GLLC's founder and first chair.

*Adopted on September 22, 2018.*