



GREAT LAKES LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

August 27, 2013

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman, U.S. House Appropriations
Committee
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman, U.S. House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2209 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member, U.S. House
Appropriations Committee
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee
on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rogers, Congresswoman Lowey, Congressman Shuster, and
Congressman Rahall,

On behalf of the U.S. members of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus (GLLC), we are writing to express our very strong support for the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The GLLC is a nonpartisan, binational organization of state and provincial legislators from the eight states and two Canadian provinces that share the Great Lakes. As state legislators from the Great Lakes states, we are keenly aware of the ecological and economic benefits of investing in restoring and protecting the lakes. Every \$1 invested in Great Lakes restoration yields a return of \$2 to \$3. Over 35 million people in two nations live within the Great Lakes basin. Connected to this vast system of lakes are 1.5 million jobs generating \$62 billion annually in wages. Truly, our Great Lakes are a natural wonder and a vital economic engine that deserves our unwavering support.

We were deeply concerned about the proposal in the Interior and Environment appropriation to cut GLRI funding in FY14 from \$284 million to \$60 million. We appreciate U.S. Representative Dave Joyce's successful effort to increase the funding level to \$210 million to continue the important work being done by countless partners at all levels of government as well as in the private and nonprofit sectors.

We also voice our strong support for the Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act (GLEEPA), which would authorize the GLRI and provide \$600 million annually to support activities related to protecting and restoring the lakes. Formal authorization of the GLRI will

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provide greater coordination and continuity for restoration and protection projects, thereby contributing to improving the health of our region's most-treasured natural resource. We are encouraged that the bill has bipartisan support from members of Congress from the Great Lakes region. By copy of this letter to the Congressional delegations from the Great Lakes states, we encourage their action in support of the GLRI and GLEPPA.

We appreciate your leadership and your attention to this matter, and we look forward to a response. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Lisa Janairo at 920.458.5910.

Sincerely,

U.S. Members of the GLLC Executive Committee



Senator Ann H. Rest, Minnesota
Chair



Representative Robyn Gabel, Illinois



Representative Rick Hansen, Minnesota



Representative Dan Ramos, Ohio



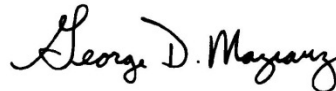
Representative Cory Mason, Wisconsin



Senator Darwin Booher, Michigan
Vice Chair



Senator Bruce Caswell, Michigan



Senator George D. Maziarz, New York



Representative Curt Sonney, Pennsylvania

cc: U.S. Congressional Delegations from the Great Lakes States