



Great Lakes Commission des Grands Lacs

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November 17, 2003

Hon. John D. Dingell
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515-2215

Dear Representative Dingell:

I am writing on behalf of the eight member states of the Great Lakes Commission, to **urge your support for two key areas of research on Lake Erie: 1) deployment of new buoys; and 2) studies on its emerging "dead zone."** Appropriations for these items are included under S. Rpt. 100-144, Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2004. **The House of Representatives, however, has not appropriated funds for these initiatives.** We are concerned that these critical projects may not be funded in 2004 to address emerging problems.

The Senate has appropriated \$2.0 million for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to deploy a system of highly instrumented buoys in Lake Erie to collect critical data on the physical, chemical and biological properties of the lake. This information is critical to improving the health of the lake and the maritime safety of its users. These buoys are also key components of the overall Great Lakes Observing System (GLOS). The Act also includes an appropriation of \$448,000 for NOAA to research depletion of dissolved oxygen in the lake causing a "dead zone" which adversely affects the health of its fishery and other biota.

As a key member of the Great Lakes Congressional Delegation, your leadership is needed to secure necessary funding in the FY 2004 budget to address research needs of Lake Erie.

The Great Lakes Commission, an interstate compact agency founded in state and federal law, is dedicated to the informed use, management and protection of the Great Lakes. We thank you for your consideration, and for your continued leadership on issues of priority interest to the Great Lakes Commission and its eight member states. Should you have any questions please contact me at 734-665-9135 or mdonahue@glc.org.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Donahue, Ph.D.
President/CEO

/jmd

Ensuring environmental and economic prosperity for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region through communications, policy research and development, and advocacy.