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## Coalition of states, cities, tribes, business, industry, and conservation groups urge Congress to pass Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act

**Ann Arbor, Mich.** – A coalition of Great Lakes states, cities, tribes, business, industry, and conservation leaders today called on congressional leaders to pass the [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act](#), bipartisan legislation recently approved by committees in both the House and Senate. The bill would authorize the [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#) (GLRI), a successful and popular program that is helping states and local partners clean up degraded toxic hotspots, restore habitat for fish and wildlife, thwart Asian carp and other invasive species, and prevent polluted runoff that can close beaches and cause harmful algal blooms in the eight-state Great Lakes region.

“Restoring the Great Lakes creates jobs, stimulates economic development, and protects fresh drinking water for 30 million people,” reads the letter to House Speaker Paul Ryan, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid. “The lakes currently generate more than 1.5 million jobs and \$60 billion in wages annually, and provide the foundation for a \$30 billion tourism economy. The Great Lakes are an invaluable resource worth restoring and protecting, and this legislation is critical to sustaining our collective efforts toward this end. We urge you to support passage of this legislation in the current session of Congress.”

GLRI efforts have been underway since 2010, funded annually by the program’s inclusion in the President’s budget and with broad bipartisan support from Congress. The bills approved by House and Senate committees will remove the annual uncertainty and help ensure continued support for the program by the next administration. The coalition is urging congressional leaders to take action now to pass the bipartisan legislation—[H.R. 223](#) sponsored by Rep. David Joyce (R-Ohio) and [S. 1024](#) sponsored by Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.)—before congressional actions slow during the run up to the fall election.

The letter was signed jointly by the [Great Lakes Commission](#), [Healing Our Waters- Great Lakes Coalition](#), [Great Lakes Fishery Commission](#), [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#), [Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority](#), [Council of Great Lakes Industries](#) and the [Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition](#).

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*The Great Lakes Commission, led by Chair Jon W. Allan, director of the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes, is an interstate compact agency established under state and U.S. federal law and dedicated to promoting a strong economy, healthy environment and high quality of life for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region and its residents. The Commission consists of governors' appointees, state legislators, and agency officials from its eight member states. Associate membership for Ontario and Québec was established through the signing of a "Declaration of Partnership." The Commission maintains a formal Observer program involving U.S. and Canadian federal agencies, tribal authorities, binational agencies and other regional interests. The Commission offices are located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Learn more at [www.glc.org](http://www.glc.org).*