



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



Great Lakes
Metro Chambers
Coalition

December 8, 2014

Dear Members of the Great Lakes House Delegation:

We are writing to convey our support for H.R. 5764, the **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2014**, bipartisan legislation recently introduced by Representatives David Joyce, Louise Slaughter, Sander Levin, and John Dingell. We understand the bill may be considered this week under suspension of the rules and urge you to support it. **This is a top regional priority for the Great Lakes states, local communities, tribes, conservation organizations, and business and industry.**

This legislation provides formal authorization for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), an ambitious regional restoration program for the Great Lakes that is cleaning up degraded “toxic hotspots,” halting Asian carp and other invasive species, and preventing polluted runoff that closes beaches and causes harmful algal blooms. It provides a solid legislative platform to ensure our region continues to work together successfully to implement a science-based and outcomes-focused plan of action for restoring and protecting the Great Lakes.

The bill directs U.S. EPA to collaborate with the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force and state and local partners to select the best combination of projects to protect and restore the Great Lakes. It focuses on restoration projects that can be implemented quickly, will achieve environmental outcomes outlined in the new Great Lakes Action Plan and Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and that leverage other funding.

Passing this legislation now will clarify the focus and accountability of our restoration efforts and ensure the program continues to achieve effective results. We recently worked with federal agencies to rewrite the GLRI Action Plan, which lays out our region’s restoration goals and objectives, and revises how we measure progress. The new plan addresses the Government Accountability Office’s review, which found no major deficiencies in the GLRI program.

Restoring the Great Lakes creates jobs, stimulates economic development, and protects fresh drinking water for 30 million people. The lakes currently generate over 1.5 million jobs and \$60 billion in wages annually, and provide the foundation for a \$30 billion tourism economy. **Clearly, the Great Lakes are an invaluable resource worth restoring and protecting, and this legislation is critical to our collective efforts toward this end. We urge you to support this bill.**

Sincerely,

Tim Eder
Executive Director
Great Lakes
Commission

Todd Ambs
Director
Healing Our Waters-
Great Lakes Coalition

William Taylor
Chair, U.S. Section
Great Lakes
Fishery Commission

David A. Ullrich
Executive Director
Great Lakes and
St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

Jane A. TenEyck
Executive Director
Chippewa Ottawa
Resource Authority

Kathryn A. Buckner
President
Council of
Great Lakes Industries

Ed Wolking, Jr.
Executive Director
Great Lakes
Metro Chambers Coalition