



RESOLUTION

Adopted March 7, 2018

Supporting Growth of the Cruising Industry in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region

Whereas, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are a natural treasure and an economic asset supporting a tourism economy that is vital to the eight Great Lakes states and two Canadian provinces; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River maritime transportation system is the world's largest inland waterway system, featuring more than 100 commercial ports and a continuous waterway spanning more than 2,300 miles; and

Whereas, the global cruising industry has shown significant, steady growth since 2009, supporting more than one million full-time jobs and \$40 billion in wages and salaries; and

Whereas, there is significant demand in North America and abroad for cruise options that offer all-inclusive accommodations, immersive cultural experiences, and smaller-scale group travel in regions with natural beauty, unique history, and high levels of security; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region offers a wealth of natural beauty provided by unique landscapes, vibrant coastal communities, and abundant wildlife that make the region an ideal destination for cruising; and

Whereas, supporting the growth of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence cruising industry is an opportunity to strengthen the regional maritime system and bolster the economic vitality of coastal communities throughout the region; and

Whereas, a more efficient and predictable regulatory environment is needed in the U.S. and Canada for customs, border, and pilotage procedures governing cruising operations to further grow the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence cruising industry.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in collaboration with the Great Lakes states, cruise operators, ports and other stakeholders, should in the near-term institute a U.S. customs clearance system with four fixed locations in Duluth, Minnesota; Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan; Detroit, Michigan; and Cleveland, Ohio for Great Lakes-St Lawrence cruise passengers; and

Be It Further Resolved, that in the longer term, the U.S. and Canadian federal governments should work toward a system that subjects passengers to one full customs clearance into the U.S. or Canada per cruise, regardless of the sequence of ports visited or the number of times crossing the border, and other appropriate arrangements to facilitate cruising in the region while maintaining border security requirements; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the U.S. and Canadian federal governments should collaborate to address challenges related to pilotage, including costs, administrative complexity, and reliable delivery of pilotage services that affect the economic viability of the cruise industry in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region;

Be It Further Resolved, that industry leaders, professional associations, coastal communities, and regional authorities are encouraged to invest resources to develop new cruising products, expanded cruise traffic to new

destinations and attractions, innovative customer experiences, and joint action plans in coordination with local and regional partners; and

Be It Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission supports these priorities aimed at growing the cruise tourism industry in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region as part of its commitment to strengthening the region's water-based economy.

*Adopted at the 2018 Semiannual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, March 6-7, 2018 in Washington, D.C.
The resolution was passed unanimously.*